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THE  
INDIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL WORK

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# AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH TO RURAL REHABILITATION

A. M. LORENZO

The rural social communities of India are today experiencing a sudden retrogression and disintegration due to a disruption of the ecological balance between folk, work and habitat. This disintegration will continue so long as the fundamental laws of ecological balance are not understood. The author, in the following article, discusses such ways and means as will not only arrest the decay of our village communities, but also regenerate and rehabilitate them.

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The formation of rural social communities in India is an age-long process, which is determined and extensively guided by physico-environmental influences. In one country alone several types of settlements may flourish side by side due to regional variations. The sparse settlements of the north-west plains in India, with a capitalistic system of wheat culture, lie in bare contrast with the congested settlements of the eastern and north-eastern rice-regions, where some of the world's highest records of rural density are noticeable. Similarly in China and Egypt, the Huangho and the Nile valleys, with their characteristic rice and wheat cultivation, account for compact and sparse rural settlements, respectively. Nature itself tends to develop such social traits as have sufficient resistance for survival in a given habitat.

A village community is an organism—it grows, undergoes progressive differentiation of structure, correlated with progressive change of function, and elaborates the mutual dependence of its parts and the life of its aggregates. But the outstanding features which must not be overlooked are, that it is not discrete, but a concrete whole; it is not asymmetrical; and it is sensitive in all its parts, having a controlling centre. So long as the reciprocal bargain exists between man and his environment, the ecological processes work in absolute harmony and keep alive the bonds of community, but when man's artificial aids of control supercede the natural, a new milieu is conditioned which considerably

reacts upon the atoms of community existence.

The monsoon regions of northern India are characterized by a well marked division of agricultural seasons and the seasonal cycles of economic and social activities. But this routine of agricultural and social practices is considerably modified in the zones of agricultural insecurity where wells and canals minimize the periods of hyper-activity and absolute idleness imposed by the cycle of seasons. Also the nature of cropping and the conditions of proprietorship and tenancy largely govern the attitudes, social behaviour, and reciprocal relations of social groups.

Monsoons affect cropping, which in turn determines the rural density. The *pattadari* system of cultivation and the collective management of irrigation favour social cohesiveness. Interesting systems of communal tenures are met with in the more arid regions of south western Punjab and western U.P., where wells and water-courses are owned by a group of cultivators in common with adequate rights to irrigate their fields. It is these collective irrigation enterprises which weld together semi-nomad tribes into stable communities. In the *Bhaia Chara* village communities of northern India we find everywhere rules and regulations for the grazing of cattle on common wastes and pastures. This not only controls overgrazing but protects the land's fertility by communal interest. Thus the agricultural practices stabilize the popula-

tion and introduce permanent relationships between different economic groups in a region.

Agriculture fosters and is fostered by the peaceful character of a settled population. It presupposes a relative security and a mutual dependence. Wissler observed that the activities connected with sowing, watching, and harvesting on collective basis were due to the comparative insecurity in the primitive society. The domestication of animals as a complementary activity to agriculture led to more domestic and sedentary habits. The characteristic field distribution, which ensured the allotment of different soil-blocks out of the tribal settlements, rendered equal opportunities in agriculture to the members of the community. Thus the *tappas* or *tarfs* (tribal tracts) were divided into *thoks* which usually became the administrative village of the clans, and these were sub-divided into *pattis* or *paras* and distributed to individuals according to their needs. The regulation of common wastes and grazing lands and the periodical re-distribution of the family lands stabilized the temporary settlements into permanent communities. Thus the totemic, territorial, and linguistic causes were more important than the kinship and consanguineous relationships which have simultaneously moulded the character of economic enterprises.

Radhakamal Mukerjee observes that the stability of population is typified by the fact that land becomes the dominant force in the agricultural community, while the gradation is apt to become more crystallized into rigid social groups or castes among the agricultural people. Land not only becomes the chief social force, but also the main social binder. Similarly, both Oppenheimer and Symkovich offer sufficient data to prove that village communities all over the world are mere stages in the development of intensive agriculture.

A study of the comparative village development shows that the villages were at first bound by a fictitious tie of brotherhood, but soon this bond of common economic interest was superseded by communal organization of both the economic and social institutions. But it must be remembered that these village communities have not developed only out of the characteristic field distribution enterprises of the past. In many tracts where *pattadari* and *thok* landlordism is absent these communities flourish under most perfect and healthy social and economic organizations.

Noteworthy survivals of older feelings and practices are still found in different regions in the form of pre-emption laws (by which neighbours and relations have preference to land); panchayats; communal and hierarchical functionaries; in most of the now dwindling villages on the northern banks of the Jamuna, in the Ganges-Jamuna-Doab, and along the Sub-Himalayan Belt.

*The Progressive Decline of Rural Social Communities.*—The social man is the product of village communities. Modern civilization, most of which is found in urban or suburban areas, is a continuity of the rural culture. Thus the nucleus of social structure is the village rather than the town. We have often ignored these two supplementary factors of our dual civilization, and have wrongly emphasized only one aspect of our cultural heritage, thus giving rise to biased conclusions.

The perfect social communities have become sparse and desolate. The remains of the once flourishing compact social groups are to be traced from the broken walls, neglected common lands, and rudimentary wells with which the whole of Ganges-Jamuna-Doab is honeycombed. There is a growing conflict of interest, disparity of communal labour, shortage of pastures, and absence of co-operative

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spirit in the modern village communities which claim their descent from the parent communities of the ancient and medieval periods. What has gone wrong? Have the rural communities died away and their disintegrated elements spread far and wide?

Kropotkin denied that village communities died a natural death. Wherever the peaceful settlements of the peasants were not disturbed by pestilence, wars, famines, and droughts, they steadily improved the methods of their tilling and living. It was only when artificial aids in the reorganization of the villages were introduced that they received a staggering blow which has proved almost fatal. Rural history in the Orient is quite distinct from that in the Occident. In Europe, the village was overshadowed by feudalism and imperialism which obscured and in some cases completely eclipsed the ancient communalism which is far more widespread in India.

In Germany, Oppenheimer observed that the liberties of the free peasantry were overthrown at least three times through the process of expropriation and declassification. The enclosure movement in England made the lord the actual owner of the land hitherto enjoyed in common by his tenants, and thus the small free holders were completely subdued. Similarly, in western Europe, as Irvine observes, the landlord was the owner of common lands and such conveniences as the mill and wind-presses. Both in India and Russia the usurpation of the common pasture lands was the first step in the decay of village communities. The lesson which the European rural history teaches is that the centralization of the ownership in land and economic individualism of village officials and functionaries had upset the coparcenary interest of different grades of proprietors in the soil.

Another fatal blow has been given by the new policies of land settlement which tended to obliterate the careful adjustment of the rights in land and communal functionaries and the control of common funds, irrigation and pastures, which had evolved through the centuries in response to the agricultural needs and social instincts of the people. Further, since small ownership and collective management of irrigation in rice culture areas are closely connected with the families, the disintegration of such co-operative enterprises has not only led to agricultural decline, but has seriously affected the social fabric of the Indian web of life.

Equally disastrous have been the effects of successive invasions and periodical expropriations of the peasantry, followed by severe famines and epidemics. For fifteen hundred miles along the base of the hill from which the invaders came, there stretched an uncultivated borderland, from twenty to fifty miles in breadth, that yielded no food for man. The characteristic of Indian economic life in the 16th and 17th centuries was pillage and plunder by oppressive governors who wrung out money from a poverty-stricken peasantry. In 1626 a Dutch merchant described the country as "desolated" by exactions.

Tavernier in 1640 found that whole provinces had become deserts from whence the peasants had fled on account of the tyranny of the native rulers. In the 18th century the Mahrattas became freebooting companies; a Persian Army devastated the Punjab and Delhi, and left the city burnt, stripped and desolated; and the five Afghan invasions had reduced the peasantry of the Gangetic plains to skin and bone. In 1847 every two or three years the Sikh army harried the fields of Bannu people, trod down their harvest, and burnt their houses. The British took over

the frontier in 1849 and no less than 56 military expeditions were necessary to establish order and peace. The culmination of all rural ruin was reached during 1857-58, when the mutiny and its aftermath completely uprooted the vestige of peasant prosperity. Thus we find that the village communities had been exposed to severe cruelty and ordeals during the past four hundred years, and even to-day we find

them breathing brokenly under the heels of British Imperialism.

The characteristic concentration of population in cities and a continued flight from the land has greatly regressed the social and economic institutions and progressively devitalised the village communities. Intensive industrialization has created definite regions with characteristic social habits and usages :

1. Manufacturing cities	Excess of males over females	Population floating, irresponsible, with no economic solidarity and social integrity
2. Plantation regions	Excess of females over males	Seasonal labour, disorganized social life, and cultural confusion
3. Old village settlements	Old persons, women and children predominate	Families intact, poorly supported, and stay-at-home
4. Frontiers of cultivation	Strong men, young women, few children	Growth of new familiarities, cultural fusion and prosperous peasantry

The relationship subsisting between the city and the country through rural-urban migrations has become of great significance. Economically, it constitutes one of the major forms of co-operation and division of labour. Culturally, it represents the infusion of the culture of the country into the city. Demographically, it presents an important form of social metabolism of population currents and counter-currents.

Some prominent rural sociologists strongly maintain the attitude that the growth of cities and urbanization will sooner or later bring about the crash of modern civilization. Henri Bunle observed that in Europe the number of cities with a population of over 1,00,000 was 33 in 1800 and 202 in 1920, and that "the urban world increased while the rural world decreased ; the non-agricultural population increased

while the agricultural population decreased." In India, also, there is noticeable a tendency not merely of a growth of urban population at the expense of rural population, but a steady encroachment of urban interests upon rural interests. The percentage of rural population to total population in India declined from 91 in 1891 to 87 in 1941 ; and the number of rural settlements decreased from 713,825 to 655,892 during the same period. Moreover, during this fifty-year period, the expropriation of peasant proprietors and the growth of non-cultivating rent-receivers and latifundia farming, have created a land-hungry peasantry. There are, to-day, 33 million landless agricultural workers in India, and if we include the unspecified classes also, no less than 67 million workers will be found constituting the floating "employable"

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population in rural areas, with a marked tendency to drift cityward at periodical intervals. These observations bring home the fact that intensive urbanization, and the consequent de-ruralization, have brought about the disintegration of village communities in all parts of the country.

Moreover, an indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources, under the sway of modern cultural contact, that is, the penetration of the traits of machine civilization into the culture complex of vegetable civilization, augmented by a chain of disturbances in the resource equilibria obtaining between rural and urban environments, has thrown the rural economy of India into the vortex of a mighty socio-economic revolution. In an old country, like India, where population has not merely multiplied, but is regionally ill-distributed, the natural balance between food and mouths can hardly be maintained. The extension of mechanized cultivation and the commercial cropping of exotic annual and perennial plants, uncontrolled grazing, and the abuse of water through artificial systems of drainage—all have left behind a legacy of dessicated and impoverished land, denuded forests, and exhausted sub-soil water resources, which are directly responsible for an alternate sequence of droughts, famines, and epidemics. By these periodic improvident interferences, man has brought ruin upon himself and disaster upon his social institutions.

Civilization never rests contented within the laws of the region—it oversteps, and turns them to man's hostility. It often betrays man, and dooms him to prolonged economic misery and social degeneration. Wherever and whenever man has not planned the appropriation of natural resources on a continuous basis, we find his habitat laid waste after a few generations

of brilliant and wasteful career in the achievement of the much maligned machine civilization. Thus so long as a reciprocal bargain exists between man and his environment, the ecological processes work in absolute harmony, but when man's artificial aids of control supercede the natural, an artificial environment is brought into existence which can but poorly imitate the real one.

*Rehabilitatory Measures.*—We have seen how the geographical environment guides and controls our social and economic actions. We have also noticed that there exists a balance between organism and its geophysical milieu. Finally, our observations also testify to the fact that the ecological balance between man and his habitat is always disturbed in the process of cultural achievement, as a result of which the struggle for existence becomes fiercer; and, ultimately, many social groups, which are thrown out of gear in the process of adaptation, are thereby exterminated. The rural social communities of India which exhibit such organizations as are closely evolved and controlled by their characteristic physical environments, are today experiencing a sudden retrogression and disintegration due to a disruption of the ecological balance between folk, work, and habitat. Not until the fundamental laws of ecological balance are understood alike by the masses, the economists, and the governments, this disintegration will continue, and, poverty and unemployment shall persist in the midst of potential plenty.

The village communities in India have not died away; they are fast sinking to death. The growth of individualism and industrialization have not exterminated them, they are disintegrating them piecemeal. The modern capitalist latifundia farming, with its characteristic systems of

landholding and tenures, has not yet completely disorganized them; it is distorting them systematically. Therefore, there is yet time for the economists, social workers, and the State, to seize the earliest opportunity of devising such ways and means, as will not only arrest the decay of these socio-economic institutions, but will regenerate and rehabilitate them. Some outstanding and immediate measures will be on the following lines :

I. A drastic change in the land policies of India which are based on individualistic notions of western economists.

- (a) Eradication of the evils of absentee landlordism and sub-infeudation.
- (b) Redistribution of holdings, integration of *pattis* into *thoks*, and the introduction of intensive legislative measures to maintain economic holdings.
- (c) Regeneration of peasant proprietors, and accommodation of landless agricultural proletariat to village occupations.

II. Checking the breaking-up of rural family solidarity by revision and modification of inheritance laws.

- (a) Restoration of pre-emption rights to members of a family or village community to enjoy a preferential right to a bargain in the disposal of *pattis* of village land.
- (b) Redistribution of common pastures, water courses, and forest lands to compact village communities.
- (c) Reorganization of functional hierarchies, not on social but, purely, on economic basis.

III. Securing the zones of agricultural insecurity against periodical droughts and famines.

- (a) Development of a net-work of wells, tanks and canals, and the introduction of co-operative irrigation societies.
- (b) Reclamation of cultivable wastes by the introduction of dry-farming.
- (c) Afforestation of ravinous tracts, and maintaining a ratio of 1:4 between forests and agriculture.

IV. An extensive and concentrated exploitation of both vegetable and animal resources, and development in the technique of agricultural production and distribution.

- (a) Maintaining a balance between agriculture and forestry, occupations and population, and their respective resource environments.
- (b) Co-ordinating agents of production, and allocating available man-power to branches of regional economic endeavour, in the light of technical adjustments and a competitive system of exchange.
- (c) Evolving a corporate economy in the country involving regional co-operation, with a view to restoring regional occupational balance and equitable distribution of resources.

V. Raising the plane of living of rural population in general and of agricultural working classes in particular.

- (a) Restrictions on size of rural families, through preventive measures.

- (b) Fixing by legislative measures the minimum wage for all classes of agricultural workers.
- (c) Planning food-supply—the need for nutritious and wholesome food for rural population.

VI. *Controlling currents and countercurrents of rural urban migrations, and stabilizing rural population.*

- (a) “Back-to-the land” propaganda in regions of agricultural decay.
- (b) Introduction of co-operative industries ancillary to cultivation, to supplement income from agriculture.
- (c) Checking the wholesale migration of able-bodied men and women to urban areas, both by persuasion and legislation.

VII. *Establishment of peace and order for the security of life and property in remote rural areas.*

- (a) Re-institution of Bhaia Chara villages and communal administration of rural property.
- (b) Rehabilitation of panchayats, one for each village, which should be linked up with urban municipalities.
- (c) Strengthening of village watch and ward schemes, and mutual aid societies.

VIII. *Planning the countryside by maintaining an ecological balance between man and land, folk and work, food and mouths.*

- (a) Remodelling of village sites ; and evolving a rural housing policy, adaptable to characteristic climatic zones, size of families, and the needs of the people.

- (b) Making village life attractive and living pleasurable by the introduction of co-operative better living societies.

- (c) Evolving a long-range planning in the direction of rural health and sanitation, social security, recreation, and organization of agrarian movements.

These problems of rural rehabilitation cannot be dissolved by a mere mechanical adjustment of corporate social institutions into the framework of a competitive economic system, nor can the process of reconstruction be achieved without enormous cultural and economic friction. After a century of unco-ordinated industrial evolution, the country has been broken into numerous zones of economic rigidity and social instability, characteristic of machine civilization, which by injecting themselves into the compact zones of vegetable civilization have widened the social distance between the rural and urban spheres. The fundamental bases of planning will, therefore, rest not on compensatory economic co-ordination, but on the dissolution of zones of economic rigidity ; not on international competition, but on regional co-operation ; not on mechanical development of factors of production, but on the functional appraisal of relations of production ; and finally, not merely on the individualistic system of economic anarchy, but on a socialized process of institutional hierarchy.

The darkness which prevails around us has been created by systematically fostered prejudices and organized selfishness. There is no denying the fact that the progressive decline of our village communities, so sacred to human relationship and human possession, is due in the large measure to the present social and economic structure



controlled and conditioned by an imperialistic system of exploitive economy. But, there is no reason why a free India should not reconstruct her economic life and social institutions in harmony with her geographical milieu, and establish once again a balance between life and region in which nature delights and man attains enduring peace and prosperity. Only by a determined endeavour and decisive line of action, a definite programme and dynamic policy,

a highly effective organization and regional methodology of reconstruction, can we arrest the decay of our social institutions and rehabilitate them for the benefit of future generations. The rural social communities of India have yet to play their part in the future life of the country, and by efficient control and planned organization they will lead the nation to a broader outlook, a quicker compromise, and a perfect adaptation.

# SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE LEPROSY PROBLEM

T. N. JAGADISAN •

In India leprosy is not uncommon. Public abhorrence of this disease, often accompanied by social ostracism, makes the lot of the innocent patient miserable. Due to the ignorance of the true nature of leprosy, the patients are seldom treated as sick human beings needing care. Eking out an existence by begging is often the only avenue open to the impoverished victim. The prevention of leprosy depends to a large extent on the formation of an accurate and enlightened public opinion. This article seeks to lay down certain principles which, if intelligently followed, should in the end help towards the ultimate control of the most cruel disease that flesh is heir to.

Mr. Jagadisan is the Secretary to the Kasturba Gandhi Leprosy Work and the Honorary Publicity Secretary to the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association, Madras.

Modern thought has been steadily moving, from regarding medical services as attending to the individual patient or to the particular ailment, to the socio-medical approach which takes into account the social background of ill-health and attempts not merely to treat the disease but to study and eradicate the conditions governing it. In a disease like leprosy, complicated by social stigma and consequent psychological and economic factors, the social background of the disease deserves even more than ordinary study. It cannot be too often emphasised that the leprosy patient is, just like any other, a person with a personality and a will demanding self-expression. Just like others, therefore, he has his needs and the needs of his family. It becomes necessary to understand, not pity, the patient's position. In the past, there has been too much sentiment and horror surrounding the subject of leprosy that either one loathed a patient, out of fear, or made him the recipient of charity, out of sentiment. The great need in the handling of the problem is sympathetic understanding, which would take into account the facts of the disease and go into the medical, social and economic aspects of the problem.

The stress formerly has been on the alleviation of suffering and the relief of the needy because it was believed that leprosy was a disease not at all amenable to treatment and as such the only thing to do was to provide relief. Moreover, there was an

erroneous notion that leprosy was only a disease of the poor and the dirty and that, therefore, the need was mainly one of charity and relief. Unfortunately, this old view, that all that could be done was to house for life the needy, helpless and abandoned victims of the disease, still largely persists, not only in the minds of the general public but also among administrators, legislators and sometimes even medical and public health authorities. The only way, the only radical way, of solving many of the social and economic problems connected with leprosy is to emphasise that leprosy presents fundamentally a medical problem and that if today it presents some peculiar social and economic problems it is because the public have not learned to treat it as any other disease preventable, treatable and not beyond alleviation even where the disease is in the advanced stage.

*The mental factor in leprosy.* —At present, it would not be an exaggeration to say that leprosy should be regarded as a disease affecting not only the body but also the mind of the patient. Except in the severe types and in the advanced stages and usually under neglect, leprosy is not physically a painful disease, but the mental suffering of the leprosy patient, and often of his immediate relations, is far greater than the physical suffering. He or she becomes a marked person, and a heavy burden overweighs the entire family. The fact

that the public are ignorant of the distinction between non-infective and infective cases and the fact that the public do not realise that leprosy, far from being an easily communicable disease, is actually one of the least communicable of diseases make the position of the leprosy patient very hard. It would be easy to stir sympathy and indignation by dealing with the various types of suffering and victimisation that the unfortunate patient has to suffer from an ignorant and prejudiced public, but, without wasting words, the situation is that the leprosy patient reads the words "NOT WANTED" written in bold letters all over. Sometimes, to ignorance and prejudice is added, a third factor, malice. Where the fact of a person having leprosy can be used against him, it becomes an aid to human mischief. Such malice, I believe, is not common and, on the whole, ignorance and prejudice are more to be blamed.

Apart from the avoidable mental suffering, such an attitude materially affects the cure and prevention of leprosy. The fear and shame which overtake a person on whom a diagnosis of leprosy is pronounced is so great that, for long years, the patient tends to conceal the disease even from those nearest to him and does not take any steps either to treat himself or to protect those coming into contact with him. The tragedy of the situation is that, in the earlier years, when the disease is more amenable to treatment, the patient does not seek it and goes to the doctor too late, having tried to conceal till he can no longer conceal. So long as leprosy is a subject whispered about in secrecy and surrounded by horror and fear, it will be impossible to deal with the medical aspect of the problem. As long as the medical aspect of the problem does not receive enough attention, it will continue to be a sad social and economic

problem resulting in avoidable human suffering and wastage of human power.

The psychology of the patient and the public need to be revolutionised, but how shall we do this? Education of the public is the one suggested remedy, but we need something more than an appeal to the intellect in a problem so complicated by ancient prejudice. A conversion of the heart is called for. Taking the lead from Mahatma Gandhi, our National Government can regard leprosy work as a cardinal item of constructive effort. But, unfortunately, as leprosy has no political appeal, only a few leaders, who have imbibed Gandhiji's ideas in all their comprehensive fullness, take interest in the subject. The need, from the point of view of revolutionizing the psychology of the public, is the emergence of an all-India leader, of acknowledged standing, who will be able to do what Gandhiji himself would willingly do, but is for obvious reasons unable to do, compel the attention of leaders and governments and enlist from them an intelligent handling of the problem. Leprosy workers should realize the importance of the step that Gandhiji has taken in including leprosy in the Constructive Programme and by devotion and zeal win the support of leaders. So far, leprosy has not made much headway among the public and the leaders, because the workers have themselves been as isolated as the patients. We must arrest the attention of the leaders and by our zeal win their support, for, where prejudice lurks in the best of us, and fear and horror have been imbibed with the mother's milk, we need an appeal for a change of heart from the very best in the land. It is our supreme good fortune that our great national leader has thrown out a call to the nation. May we not expect that other leaders will come forward to realize the urgency of this neglected problem? In the meanwhile, those who labour in the field

of leprosy ought to spread knowledge regarding the disease and strive to get leprosy accepted as an ordinary disease capable of being tackled like other diseases.

*The present attitude of the public.*—Those who deal with its practical aspects have to recognize two extremes of attitude among the public with regard to leprosy. In the villages, and amongst the less educated, neglect rather than fear governs the contact with the leprosy patient. In a village, often an infective case is found to move intimately with children and sometimes an ignorant mother may be seen cheerfully watching her children play with an infective case. Amongst the more educated classes, fear of leprosy is more prevalent. Not infrequently, the fear is excessive and takes the shape of panic. It would be true to say, however, that, even where people are indifferent with regard to ordinary social contacts, difficulties arise for the patient and the members of his family with regard to marriage. There is a general social stigma attached to the disease both in the town and the village. In the village, indifference to ordinary social contacts contributes to the spread of the disease. In the cities, an exaggerated fear and consequent social stigma make it difficult, especially for the richer homes, to take early and suitable precautions for the control of the disease. The social position of a person suffering from leprosy also varies in village and city and according to one's class and education. In the villages, persons with leprosy follow their occupation and lead a normal life as long as they are physically able to do so. In the more educated circles, the social and economic consequences of leprosy are more marked. The social consequences of leprosy to a woman are far more serious than to a man. If the disease appears in a man after marriage, generally, his family life is not affected by it, but a woman with

leprosy is frequently deserted by the husband. The writer has known of the desertion of girls with a very mild touch of non-serious leprosy which left no prominent mark. The higher the caste, the more educated the people, the richer the family, the more are the social consequences of leprosy. And women, as in other things, suffer most.

*Leprosy as a domestic problem.*—The general public, especially those who have not had relations or friends with leprosy, are apt to think that the way to prevent the spread of leprosy is to see that leprosy patients do not appear in public places or travel in public conveyances. But the public do not stop to think of the intimate contact into which patients are thrown in their families and of how an infective patient spreads the disease in his household. It is not generally recognized that the commonest form in which leprosy spreads is by infective patients living with healthy children in one and the same house, often under over-crowded conditions. In India, leprosy is essentially a domestic or a household problem. If infective patients be persuaded not to come into close contact with children, the disease will gradually die out, for in the absence of child infection, leprosy cannot be maintained in a community. The poorer classes are ignorant and unable to take precautions even if asked to do so. The richer classes are not often less ignorant, but even when they are instructed as to what they should do, they omit to take precautions for fear of resultant publicity. The only way of solving the leprosy problem is to bring leprosy into the open, and leprosy will come into the open only when people regard it as an ordinary disease, preventable and treatable and one of which a person need not feel ashamed.

*Problems of isolation.*—In view of the fact that many infective cases do not respond quickly to treatment, and that a

considerable number of these continue to be infective even when there is clinical improvement, leprosy is more easily prevented than cured. The only way in which leprosy can be prevented or controlled is by the ensuring of conditions in which healthy people, especially children, do not live in prolonged and close contact with infective patients. "It is no use adopting an attitude, as it is sometimes done, that isolation in India is impracticable, and, therefore, other methods must be used. There is no other method which will replace isolation. What is to be done is to try to evolve methods of isolation which are suitable to Indian conditions."<sup>1</sup>

It is necessary, however, to point out that isolation does not mean ostracism. In a statement prepared by one of the leading students of the disease, Dr. R. G. Cochrane, in consultation with twenty-seven of India's prominent medical men who are signatories to the statement, it is pointed out: "The words 'isolation' and 'segregation' suggest to people's minds the rigours almost of banishment. But 'isolation' with regard to leprosy practically means avoidance of close contact between the children and infective cases."<sup>2</sup> If this aspect of isolation were more stressed it would be easier to convince the public that what is required is not the banishment of the leprosy patient into far off colonies or settlements but the avoidance of particular types of contact. It must, however, be pointed out that in the crowded homes of India it is generally difficult to ensure absence of close contact between children and infective cases. Poverty influences leprosy in so far as it leads to overcrowding in the poorer homes. But it influences only in so far as it leads to overcrowding, for the rich man's child seems to be as

prone to get leprosy as the poor man's child given close and prolonged contact with an infective case of leprosy in childhood. The crux of the preventive problem of leprosy is the saving of children from infection. And this needs a humane and cheap form of segregation that can protect the healthy without punishing the sick. For it has been the experience of past work in the various parts of the world that only with the free and willing co-operation of patients and their relations can we set up an effective system of isolation.

Though institutional isolation is the most effective form of isolation, we should try methods by which we can keep the vast majority of patients in the homes and villages of India. The huge expense involved in a system of segregating every infective case, the loss of self-support, self-respect and happiness to the patient and the destitution of his family are to be considered in judging the claims of institutional segregation. On the other hand, we have to remember that intelligent co-operation on the part of the patient and vigilance on the part of his family are needed to practise effective home isolation. The education of the public, the raising of the standard of living, the increase in general knowledge of health matters and other such items of social and economic uplift should be attempted before we create a condition of society in which it will be possible to keep the leprosy patient in the homes and villages of India, without fear of the spread of the disease. Whether leprosy spreads or not in a community depends entirely on the amount of contact between children and infective cases. In England, for instance, there are about eighty cases of leprosy, most of whom live in their homes. These cases, however, live in such a way that

<sup>1</sup> Committee appointed by the Central Advisory Board of Health (1941), *Report on Leprosy and Its Control in India* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1942), p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> "Medical Men's Statement on Leprosy," *Harijan*, Vol. X, p. 486 (January 12, 1947).

they do not come into close contact with children, and so it is held by medical authorities that there is no danger of leprosy spreading in England. In India, unfortunately, even in the more well-to-do households the members of the family crowd together and at nights the children lie huddled together with the elders. In a family with a case of leprosy, this overcrowding is the most potent factor for infection. The greater the contact, the more are the chances of infection. This is seen from the observation that experienced workers have made that in a weaving family, where little children do weaving in intimate association with the elders, leprosy more easily spreads.

The problems of isolation vary according to the economic and cultural level and the particular circumstances of a family. They also vary in town and village. The present writer knows of families composed of adults in which it has been easy to keep the infective patient at home. He has known of a few patients who have been willing and able to live in their own homes without being a danger to children. While recognizing that, in the present state of our overcrowded cities, it is difficult to isolate a patient at home, we should strive to create conditions in which more people can live in their own homes.

The evils of industrial development have affected to some extent the position of leprosy in cities. The presence of infective cases in the crowded busties and living quarters of industrial workers materially contributes to the increase of the disease. The problem of leprosy in the city will look impossible of solution when we think of it in the mass, but if we remember that only certain areas of a city are likely to be more affected the problem will become easy. For active measures will be needed

only in these areas. The problems of isolation with regard to villages are easier. In a village, where most of the people are agriculturists, the patients work by day in the fields. As they are likely to come into close contact with children only at night, huts may be built near enough the village for night segregation. A recognized authority has said: "Several methods of rural isolation have been suggested but all such methods should have the aim of discovering the minimum amount of segregation necessary to control the disease. Ninety per cent of persons in many rural areas are agriculturists who spend the greater part of the day in the fields, and so it may be that if measures are enforced to provide for night segregation, and thus infective cases are kept away from their children at night, this one measure alone might reduce the chances of infection sufficiently for it to be increasingly difficult for the disease to spread. If leprosy can be controlled by this amount of segregation, then the method has the merit of simplicity, for total segregation would necessarily involve compensation for the person segregated if he were the wage earner of the family."<sup>3</sup>

In general, public health authorities can greatly assist the leprosy campaign if they spread widely in the towns and villages of India a knowledge of the facts of the disease and insist that the infective leprosy patient, wherever he happens to be, can contribute to the control of leprosy by adopting the following precautions:—

- (a) The patient should sleep in a separate room, and take care to sleep apart from children.
- (b) His bedding and eating and cooking utensils should be kept apart.
- (c) His personal clothing, bed clothes, towels, etc., should be soaked in antiseptic solution

<sup>3</sup> Cochrane, R.G., "Leprosy Control with particular reference to the Madras Presidency," *The Indian Medical Gazette*, Vol. LXXIX, p. 43 (September 1944).

before washing, or preferably should be washed apart from the family clothes.

- (d) He should have his own chair or mat, and should not come in close contact with children.

*The problem of the beggar with leprosy.*

It has been already emphasized that from the public health point of view the problem of leprosy is not, as it is sometimes erroneously believed, the problem of beggars with leprosy but that of infective cases living permanently with the family in villages and towns. As most people tend to forget that leprosy is not confined to the poor, even administrators and legislators sometimes talk as if the leprosy problem would be solved by establishing large leprosy colonies where the needy and the vagrant can be settled. While recognizing the need of colonies for people whose economic condition is such that they cannot maintain themselves without resorting to begging, we should realise that the colony for the needy and disabled is not a solution to the leprosy problem but that it is only for the relief of suffering attending a disease which has been approached so far from the sentimental rather than the scientific stand-point. Let us alleviate the suffering of those who have been thrown in need by disease and neglect but let us remember that the more urgent need is the setting up of a preventive system that will save other people from being so affected.

The writer has gone into the history of some beggar patients who attend the Leprosy Department of the General Hospital, Madras. Invariably, they are people who have tried to remain in the village and to make a living. Having lived in the village as long as they could and, if infective, having been responsible for the spread of the disease, both in his household and perhaps among neighbours, the man migrates to the city to dwell on the pave-

ments, to obtain treatment at some outpatient department and to live by begging. Sometimes, a whole family, with a number of infected children, move out into the city to live in this manner. Such families become unwilling to take advantage of institutional accommodation even when it is offered to them.

The history of families with leprosy is an interesting study because it reveals the process by which leprosy leads to destitution. Very often, the first generation in which leprosy makes its appearance escapes social ostracism. In fact, the patient of this first generation moves with unrestricted freedom because the infective nature of the disease is not realized by friends and relations. The patient carries on his work and retains the means of self-support and, therefore, self-respect. He dies leaving a younger member or two infected. When the second generation of patients grow up, they feel the slings and arrows of social stigma and they become a marked people. They lose self-support and self-respect. Shrivelled in heart, disabled in body and wanting resources, they are reduced to destitution and sometimes to a beggar's life. If the second generation of patients are able to get married and a third generation of patients come into existence, their lot is more miserable still. I have known the desolation of a lonely member of a third generation, torn up by disease, living precariously, unattended and un comforted and dying a most miserable death. In the village in which the patient died, it was difficult to get people enough to carry the dead body to the burial ground. Bottles of phenyle had to be poured over his body before a few people agreed to carry it.

I have detailed these facts in order to show that it is not the poverty and dirt of a beggar's life that leads to his acquiring leprosy but that the unfortunate social

attitude towards leprosy leads some patients into destitution and dirt. The only radical way of solving destitution in leprosy is to emphasize the fact that a leprosy patient can, by appropriate care and management, retain his ability for work and be economically self-supporting. With self-support will come self-respect. To give the patient work is the surest way of lifting him from that utter unfriended desolation into which he tends to droop. Charity destroys him. Work can rebuild him.

II. *A Scheme for Publicity and Welfare Work.*—To remedy the many social and economic problems connected with leprosy, every province in India should have as part of its leprosy campaign a publicity and welfare organisation. A detailed scheme of such an organisation is given below in order that provincial governments might be stimulated to plan their publicity and welfare work for leprosy.

*Publicity and welfare work should go together.*—‘Publicity’ is not a process of informing or enlightening, it is ‘agitation’ in the best sense of the term, since its ultimate aim ought to be to challenge attention and evoke action. ‘Welfare’ is not merely the ameliorative social side of the work but also the preventive effort which strives to combat the repetition in society of the evils we now seek to ameliorate. In the publicity and welfare work that we attempt, a due balance has to be set up between the needs of those who suffer and the needs of those who need to be saved from having to suffer.

*Publicity : Object.*—The object of publicity is to create a reasoned outlook on leprosy in the public and in the patient, and to create conditions in society favourable to the control of leprosy and the humane treatment of patients. It would be

helpful here to quote, from the report by the committee appointed by the Central Advisory Board of Health (1941).

“The first need is that the misleading ideas about leprosy often entertained by the general public, and even by administrative officers and legislators and even, sometimes, by the medical profession and medical and public health administrators, should be abandoned. Leprosy should be realised to be what it is, an infective disease widespread in the general population in large areas in this country. Anti-leprosy work should be based on a sound knowledge of preventive medicine in general and leprosy in particular.

“While much admirable work has been done in the past and is being done at present, it should be realised that almost all work has been and is of the nature of leprosy relief work. Taking India as a whole, the task of leprosy control has hardly been considered or attempted. This unpleasant fact must be faced. At the same time, it would be entirely wrong to argue that much, if not most, of the work done is of little or no use.

“The importance of the social and humanitarian aspects of leprosy work has already been stressed and much more work of this nature will be needed in the future ; but if the task of leprosy control is ever to be attempted, there must be built up, in addition, a campaign aimed directly or indirectly at the control of leprosy and not merely at its relief.

“One difficulty to be overcome lies in the fact that the Central Government, provincial and local authorities have not fully realised that leprosy work is an essential part of the medical and public health work of the country or the province and have left the work largely to private



bodies. In other countries, central and local governments have assumed direct responsibility for the work while welcoming the co-operation of and generally assisting such bodies."

*For the educated public.* In this category we include leaders in society, legislators, administrators, social workers, teachers, etc. Though the public health authorities and medical men, being specialists, should not be brought in this class, it should be borne in mind that their ideas are sometimes apt to lag behind modern outlook and progress. Means should be devised to acquaint the members of the medical and public health profession with the latest facts and methods. For, our success in establishing a new outlook on leprosy will depend much on how soon we get our medical profession and public health authorities to be enthusiastic and well informed advocates of the modern view of leprosy."

For the general educated public, pamphlets, books, journals, articles, short stories, novels and films should be put forth. By contacting the press, newspapers should be persuaded to take a leading role in the control of leprosy by a responsible and well-informed attitude to the problem. The increasing co-operation of the All-India Radio should be sought.

*For the literate public.*—For those who can read and write but who are not highly educated, we should prepare pamphlets, posters, slogans, etc., in simple style and in their mother tongue. Exhibitions are a great aid in the education of these. The possibility of displaying attractive posters and slogans at all Railway Stations may be explored. The co-operation of the popular writers and influential editors in the regional languages should be sought. Poets, story writers and song composers should be invited to use their talents for the cause.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

*For the illiterate public of the village.*—Simple talks accompanied by lantern slides, simple exhibitions mostly pictorial in character, personal demonstrations to groups of villagers of the facts of leprosy illustrated by cases chosen from the village, are the kind of propaganda to be first attempted. Village fairs may be used for spreading a knowledge of the simple facts of the disease. Village propaganda is first best done in select areas where leprosy work is already being done; for, propaganda unrelated to work will be futile. The health inspectors may be given a course in leprosy so that within the scope of their work they may instruct villagers in the facts of leprosy and create conditions favourable for launching schemes of control. The rural development officers may also be given a course in leprosy. Wherever it is possible to get a competent leprosy worker to give talks to the village officers in training camps, those in charge of the camps may be encouraged to arrange for simple instruction in the facts of leprosy with particular reference to prevention.

*For teachers and students.*—Instruction on the facts of leprosy should be given to the pupil teachers of the higher grade and secondary grade so that they may recognize leprosy in school children and help parents with advice. Possibilities of getting a lesson on leprosy included in text books for children may be explored. Members of the publicity department and the doctors engaged in leprosy work may deliver lantern slide lectures on leprosy in schools. The co-operation of the Department of Education should be secured for such publicity.

*Welfare Work for Patients.*—Welfare work should be planned for :

- (i) Patients in the sanatoria.
- (ii) Patients at the out-patient departments.

- (iii) Patients in the villages.
- (iv) Patients discharged as the disease—arrested and the negatives.
- (v) The helpless healthy children of leprosy patients.

I. *Patients in the sanatoria.*—The welfare officer should know every patient and go into his or her history, social and economic conditions and personal problems. He must be the friend, philosopher and guide of the patient and his family and must endeavour to relieve the psychology of the patients and their relations, and lift them from the sense of utter ruin and despair that comes over them. He must stimulate the social and occupational activities of the institution and endeavour to create self-respecting men and women of value. He must endeavour to impart the human touch to the institution in everything he does and must endeavour always to bring about contacts between the public and the patients. He must secure them visits from the best men of whom they have heard but whom they could not ordinarily see, and enable them to have the best in music, in literature, in the theatre and film world, at least occasionally. He should secure religious consolation to patients of all sects by inviting suitable persons to deliver discourse, *bhajan*s, sermons, etc., and to conduct prayers. Such a welfare officer can also contribute to the research in leprosy by collecting all information regarding the family histories, the social and economic conditions of the patients, their relative suitability to work, the possibilities of their re-absorption into society on discharge, etc. For, this type of research, which has not been systematically attempted so far, will increase our understanding of the socio-medical problems of leprosy and help in the effective control of leprosy.

2. *Patients at the out-patient departments.*—The welfare officer should know every patient and go into his history, social and economic conditions, and personal problems. He should instruct the patients in the details of the management of their bodies and in the preventive precautions that they should take. He may do visiting in the case of infective patients and try to enforce precautions. In the case of patients whom he deems fit for institutional treatment, he may get them institutional accommodation. He may study the needs of the children of leprosy patients and do his best for them. Here too, fruitful research on the socio-medical problems of leprosy can be combined with the welfare work.

3. *Patients in the village.*—The first areas of the work must be in places where there are rural centres or sanatoria. From the centre the welfare worker must expand his activities into a group of neighbouring villages, take every case and organise relief and control measures with the help of the authorities of the village centre or sanatorium. These officers are best drawn from the educated villagers themselves.

4. *Helpless healthy children of leprosy patients.*—It would be advisable to discourage the establishment of healthy children's homes near sanatoria and to regard the problem of the helpless children of leprosy patients as part of the problem of orphans and poor children. This is a sound general policy but to avoid the risk of the helpless children of leprosy patients falling into total neglect we may encourage children's homes—for needy children in general—in areas of rural leprosy work and get needy healthy children of leprosy patients admitted into them.

5. *Discharged patients and negatives.*—The follow up and after care of patients is an important piece of work the beginnings of which should be firmly laid. A system

of follow up should be set up for the discharged patients. They should be brought in periodically for re-examination, their physical welfare attended to and their re-absorption into society as working men secured. The securing of employment for the disease-arrested and the negatives is a most difficult task, as the public continue to be afraid of infection from non-infective cases, and employment has to be devised in order to suit the varying factors of physical ability, mental equipment and aptitude. Considering the proportion of negatives who are the majority and seeing that, lacking employment and losing the means of self-support and, therefore, of self-respect, they become socially and economically useless, the question of negatives and their welfare becomes a primary concern of the public and government. In the present state of society the negative finds a harder fate, wanted neither in the sanatoria nor in the outside world. Changing public opinion is certainly the most radical solution to this problem, but public opinion will only change when we demonstrate, by patient toil and skilful planning of different types and grades of work, that leprosy patients can do work and be part of society without imposing a serious burden on it. The economic problem in leprosy is a vital one considering the large numbers, especially the rural families, that are involved, and the chronic nature of the disease. An experiment may be made by starting an agricultural and industrial colony in a rural setting for the negatives and disease-arrested. It is essential that, in order to render the disease-arrested fit for work, they should be previously trained in work at the sanatoria. When a patient goes out of an institution, he should go out with training for some work or other; and if he cannot of himself

get re-absorbed into society, we must help him to be so re-absorbed. To solve the urban side of this problem we may attach an employment bureau to the publicity and welfare department.

*Establishment.*—It is not wise to define rigidly the long-term range of publicity or welfare because the scope will be determined and enlarged as needs arise and in relation to the general progress of leprosy control. We may expect that a day will arrive when every major institution and every endemic district in the province will have its own department of publicity and welfare working under a central provincial department of publicity and welfare. But considering that it is a new line of work and that it demands personnel gifted with knowledge, sympathy, missionary zeal and personality, it would be wise to limit our activities and enlarge as needs arise and personnel become available.

The minimum with which we should start is to have a publicity and welfare department for the province with a publicity office and bureau. A permanent exhibition with maps, charts and reports will form a feature of this bureau. The Health Survey and Development Committee (Bhore Committee) has recommended for every provincial leprosy organisation a propaganda officer (on Rs. 350-25-500), a social worker-supervisor (on Rs. 250-25-500), and propaganda workers (on Rs. 100-5-150). They have also recommended an expenditure of Rs. 5,000/- a year on publicity and propaganda by every province.<sup>5</sup>

As previously stressed in this article, the social and economic problems connected with leprosy can be solved only by educating the public into taking a more reasonable attitude towards the disease. The public, in the opinion of the writer, will

<sup>5</sup> Report of the Health Survey and Development Committee (Simla, Government of India Press, 1946). Vol. III, p. 318.

be more quickly educated if they are made to realize that the leprosy patient is not a person on whom disability inevitably falls but is a person capable of being reconditioned into life even when 'scarred' by the disease. This task of creating men and women enjoying the dignity of self-support should be carried along two lines. We should have institutions where suitable work can be provided for the more disabled who need not only work but care. A second line of work, and the more important one from a long range view, is to fit the leprosy patient, as far as this is possible without endangering others, into the general world thus giving the leprosy patient the right which we claim for others—the right and the opportunity to feed and clothe himself. The leprosy patient, however, can come into his own, and be as other men are, only when the leaders of society realize and feel for the enormous but avoidable social and mental suffering and economic loss for which leprosy is responsible.

# EDUCATING THE MENTALLY RETARDED

KAMALA BHOOTA

Mentally retarded children constitute a serious problem for themselves, their families, and for society at large. Very little is being done in our country to remove their social inadequacy. One of the central items in the programme for their welfare is the improvement of their condition and performance by systematic training adapted to their abilities. The following article presents the educational procedure for the mentally retarded which consists of special techniques of teaching, curriculum and methods.

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It may seem like putting the cart before the horse to talk about the education and care of our mentally retarded, when even normal children in our country are sadly neglected. The large numbers of children wandering our city streets clearly indicate the colossal waste of human resources. The country's failure to provide for them and to educate them can only result in a crop of delinquents and undesirable men and women who make social progress impossible.

A small group of our children does get into schools. But even from the majority of schools little good can be expected, as our educational system is based on outworn conceptions and methods that frequently retard the child's growth and development—and is sometimes even destructive to it. Our prevailing educational outlook is well illustrated by the father who came to consult us about his eight year old son. "I simply can't make him learn," he said, "He runs away from school.....We've had four tutors for him and they have all given him up in despair.....How can he get along in life without any academic knowledge?....." To this father, as to most people, education means book-learning, which must be thrust on to the child somehow. What happens to the child's emotional life or his attitude toward people in the process of such learning is beyond their concern. It is true that the knowledge of the three R's would be an asset to the child. But he needs to develop other essential habits and skills. Further,

if he is coerced into learning uninteresting matter by equally uninteresting methods of rote, he may develop an intense dislike for his task and the taskmaster. The subsequent feeling of failure, the sense of inferiority and hostility toward authority would injure both the child's adjustment to life and his social usefulness.

Education which merely forces book learning on the child cannot create wholesome men and women. It should aim rather at the development of those capacities which the child possesses, whatever they may be to the end that he or she may live happily as a social being in a social world. Schools providing such an education should be made free and compulsory for every child, whether bright, average or dull. Lack of proper schooling or constructive outlet is apt to affect children of all types making them social liabilities. But it is likely to affect the mentally retarded much more easily and seriously. In the words of George L. Wallace, an outstanding American educator, "If society does not keep mentally deficient children busy in a constructive way during the whole of their school lives, they, in a destructive way, will keep society busy during their adult lives". It is not enough to send mentally retarded children to school. It is essential that they be given special instruction suited to their needs and capacities.

What is meant by a "mentally retarded" child? How may we describe him? A laggard in school is apt to be labelled as mentally retarded or backward.

In many cases this diagnosis may be right ; but it must be noted that slow progress in school may also be due to physical, emotional or environmental difficulties. Mental retardation is defined in terms of intelligence test results and intelligence quotients (I.Q.'s). Indeed, the tests should be administered by a trained, expert examiner. Better no test at all than an unreliable one.

Mental retardation is of varying degrees, ranging from a condition which is slightly below normal to that which shows extreme mental deficiency. We may say that an I.Q. of 100 would ideally represent a normal level of intelligence. But since normal intelligence cannot be defined as existing only at a single point and because the available tests for measuring intelligence are still not perfect, we say that the range of normal intelligence extends from approximately 90 to 100 I.Q. As we go below 90 the level of ability decreases and at 75 or 80 we reach the borderline of serious mental retardation. Traditionally, all those below 70 are classed as mentally retarded. But educational psychologists prefer to include in the group of mentally retarded, the individuals with I.Q.'s of 75 or 80. The general psychological classification in terms of I.Q.'s is as follows :

I.Q.	
Below 25	Idiot
25— 49	Imbecile
50— 69	Moron
70— 79	Borderline
80— 89	Dull
90—110	Average
110—119	Superior
120—140	V. Superior
Above 140	Genius.

This classification, however, is arbitrary. For instance, it may be just as feasible to regard the borderline defective in the range of I.Q.'s between 64 and 75.

It is well known that children with I.Q.'s below 50 are dependent on society for their maintenance. So limited is their intelligence equipment that they cannot enter school. On the contrary, they have to be provided institutional care.

Although one rarely comes across an individual having an I.Q. below 30, such a person has to be looked after like an infant. But those ranging between 30 and 50 in I.Q. are able to do simple routine jobs like sweeping and washing. So their services can be utilized by the institution caring for them.

On the other hand, children ranging from 50 to 70 or 75 need not be dependent on society. In a few cases institutionalization may be necessary, but the majority can benefit by instruction. Under proper guidance and supervision they are capable of making a good social and vocational adjustment in the community.

It is estimated that at least 5 per cent of the school age children have I.Q.'s below 78. The training of this educable group, therefore, constitutes a significant problem for education.

The school programme for these mentally retarded children must be based on an understanding of their characteristics, their special limitations and how they differ from the "normal" group.

As summarised by the U. S. National Education Association,<sup>1</sup> the pupils in the lower ranges of I.Q. show the following characteristics. They are likely to be deficient in attention, perception, association, memory and reasoning. Attention, however, can be improved by making the school programme interesting and valuable to the slow pupil and by convincing him that success in school is possible and worthwhile. His innate capacities of memory and reasoning cannot be improved ; but he can be helped to function in specific areas by special practice and instruction.

<sup>1</sup> "High School Methods with Slow Learners," National Education Association Research Bulletin Vol. XXI, No. 3 (October, 1943).

The retarded child needs to be taught to reason to the best of his ability. He usually finds the ordinary school curriculum very difficult; for he is weak in abstract learning, which forms the basis of the school curriculum. As a rule, low intelligence is accompanied by relatively low achievement in reading, language, mathematics and other subjects which depend very largely on language and number skills. The mental activities in which the backward children seem to approach children of average intelligence most closely are those involving certain perceptive and apperceptive phases of music and pictorial art.

As to motor skills, it has been found that the mentally backward and retarded children rank below the average children of the same age. But the difference is not as great as the difference in general intelligence or scholastic achievement. Careful tests have also shown that the low I.Q. pupils are somewhat inferior as a group in handwriting, drawing, sewing and handwork as well as in muscular strength, speed and accuracy of movement. However, some mentally inferior pupils may possess manual or mechanical abilities which surpass the general average.

It is true that the subnormal children cannot be expected to compensate for their academic weakness by superior or even average performance in school tasks requiring motor ability. But since they are able to do these tasks better than the ones involving intellectual ability, their school programme should include a greater proportion of manual and motor activities than the programme for their brighter school mates. Those with superior motor ability or mechanical aptitude should be given the opportunity to make the best of their capacity. Physically, the backward children tend to be somewhat below children of average intelligence. Physical

defects and abnormalities are more frequent in the mentally deficient child than in the normal child. Also, the rate of physical growth of the normal child is on the whole greater than that of the mentally defective child; but no high correlation exists between the adequacy of physical development and the adequacy of mental development. On the whole, however, the physical differences between the mentally backward and average are not great and there is much overlapping between the groups.

It is important for the school to give extra attention to the bodily development and corrective physical care of the dull and retarded pupils. For, they are less likely to receive that care outside the school. Moreover, they can function better if their physical handicaps are removed.

Socially, the backward child needs special assistance in learning to meet certain situations. A child's social development is influenced by his physical maturity and general intelligence as well as his experience with people. Usually a mentally retarded child wants to participate in social activities with others of his own age. But his limited mental ability may sometimes prove a handicap. His mental capacity may be similar to that of considerably younger pupils; but he usually dislikes associating with such in view of his greater physical maturity and experience with people. It would be unwise, therefore, to place him in the same class with younger children, at least for a major part of the school work. If compelled to remain with the younger group, he may resort to anti-social behaviour and his scholastic achievement is likely to fall below his capacity.

It has been found that emotionally, the dull children tend to be somewhat more maladjusted than those with higher

mental ability. In the former group one finds a greater proportion of abnormal emotional and nervous conditions than in the latter group. The slow pupils tend to react very much as the other pupils would if they were subjected to the same emotional strains. In schools where the dull and the bright are put in the same class and where they are required to meet the same scholastic standard, the dull are under much greater strain than the average and bright. Consequently, they more often show anxiety, excitability, shyness, oversensitivity, laziness, rebelliousness, apathy, truancy and even delinquency.

So far we have considered the characteristics and educational needs of the mentally retarded. What are the implications of these findings for the teacher of the slow children? It is obvious that in the educational scheme for the mentally retarded, the teacher has a very significant role. She must be a well-balanced, enlightened person with adequate understanding of the child and of the needs of the mentally retarded. In the first place, the teacher should bear in mind the goal to be aimed at in the education of this type of pupil. The immediate objective which should permeate school activities is the present happiness of the child. Happiness is the first right of every child and whatever promotes it contributes to his education. Therefore, the first task of the teacher is to be interested in the pupil and to like him. It would be impossible to teach the retarded child with an attitude of aversion or distaste. The teacher should let him feel that she is his friend, and not his taskmaster or a critic. She should find out what he can do and what he likes to do and capitalise his interests and abilities. She should also know something about his family life, his friends, his feelings and thoughts.

The teacher should bear in mind the objectives to be considered in the education of the mentally retarded. They are expressed as follows by Elise H. Martens, an American authority on the education of exceptional children: "A person who is physically fit, socially and morally minded, industrially capable of even the simplest job, able to give expression to whatever talents he may possess and withal of a contented spirit is the vision we need to have for the retarded child grown up. Even with the poorest grade of academic achievements if he has these qualifications, there is little likelihood in ordinary economic conditions of his becoming a menace or even a total liability to his community."<sup>2</sup>

Basically, the ideal of education is the same for all children—the fullest development of the individual's capacities. Modern education does not limit itself to book-learning. It takes into account the individual's adjustment to life as a whole. Its aim is to help the pupil to express himself constructively and to live on a plane which is on the level of his own capacity.

It is obvious then that, whether a pupil is normal or sub-normal, he needs the same basic type of educational activities. However, the educational objectives for the mentally retarded are not as broad as those for the normal; they are narrowed down to enable the individual to function in a limited personal and social sphere. The mentally retarded individual cannot contribute to life or participate in it as fully as the normal. He cannot be expected to understand the working of the social or political structure. Nor can he be expected to contribute to social progress. He cannot be a creative thinker, or a leader. However, he can be a follower. He can achieve the

<sup>2</sup> Elise H. Martens, *Mentally Retarded Children*, Washington, D. C.: U. S. Office of Education, Pamphlet 49, 1934.



adjustments within the limit of his own capacity. He can carry out the tasks of everyday life and can enjoy life at his own level of accomplishment, and if he is well-adjusted, self-respecting and self-supporting, he is contributing his share to social harmony.

The most important function of education should be to help pupils in facing situations in and out of school. Education should aim also to build up habits and attitudes that will function throughout life. If such a goal is to be realized for the retarded child, the application of all he learns at school to simple life situations should be made clear to him.

It has been mentioned already that the retarded child is weak in abstract learning. He is "thing-minded," not "thought-minded". Therefore, there should be as much concrete work in the classroom as possible.

How then may we translate these educational objectives into a school programme suitable for the retarded child? The school programme for the backward child can be best thought of as consisting of a series of life activities in which the slow are most likely to participate. They can be grouped as health, tool subjects, community life, family life, leisure and vocation.

Health should receive prime importance in the school activities. Without health, the pupil cannot develop to his fullest capacity. In order to help the child attain physical fitness the teacher should detect the child's physical defects, so that he may be given the necessary medical attention. Further, the pupil should be taught principles of health and good health habits, which will enable his body to function at its maximum efficiency. He should, for example, learn habits of cleanliness, such as keeping himself clean and tidy if he has not learnt them already. It will increase the child's self-respect to feel and

look clean and neat. It will give him a sense of power that he can help himself. In addition to health habits the teacher can introduce games and drill which improve posture and muscular co-ordination.

The school programme should emphasize not only physical health, but mental health as well. Healthy personality implies wholesome attitudes and emotional stability. While in school the child should learn to adjust himself to simple demands of life, to be interested in his environment and to be considerate of others. He should learn habits of fair-play, self-reliance, co-operation and honesty. These habits which are essential for a happy social and emotional life could be taught through group activities in the class-room.

The retarded child should also be given a practical knowledge of tool subjects, such as reading, writing, arithmetic and spelling. His "industrial capability" as well as his participation in other life activities will necessitate a background of these subjects. He should be taught these subjects, however, only to the extent to which he can benefit by them. What he needs is some simple academic work which he can easily grasp with his limited mental ability. Instruction in these subjects should be concrete, stressing their specific application to even the most simple situations. He should be helped to interpret what he reads. He should be taught how to read signs or directions and how to follow them. He must learn how to locate information in papers, magazines or bulletins. He must learn how to read letters, and also how to read stories for enjoyment. Similarly, he should learn the use of numbers in practical life situations. Finding a certain page in the book, counting change at the grocery store, finding his gain in weight, estimating the cost of his clothes, are some of the practical applications of arithmetic he should learn.

In connection with spelling and writing the pupil can be taught to make a list for shopping, to fill out a form, write letters, and keep a diary.

Another important group of life activities the retarded child should learn are those related to community life. He should be helped to understand how people live together in the city or the village. He can learn to appreciate that a city must have organizations of people to manage it. He can learn that proper living means that the laws have to be made and carried out. He should be helped to realize how the streets and public places are kept clean, and how he should contribute his part in public sanitation. Further, the pupil can study his own needs for shelter and clothing, and learn that individuals and groups are dependent on each other.

The next important group of educational activities for the backward child consists of those skills and habits which would contribute to a happy family life. His education should enable him to make his home a wholesome one for himself and for others. There are numerous domestic skills within the reach of his capacity. He could learn to take care of his clothes, keep his room clean and tidy, wash dishes, prepare vegetables, or wash and iron clothes.

Being able to help with household work will increase his self-confidence and lessen his feeling of inadequacy. On the adolescent level, a boy or a girl can master some advanced skills. The girl, for instance, can learn to take care of children, make a budget, sew clothes, and cook simple food. An adolescent boy can be taught how to prepare food, build fires, make and repair household appliances. He could learn something about plumbing, painting, electric wiring and home sanitation.

The retarded pupil needs to know how to fill his leisure hours with satisfying experi-

ences of work, play and social contacts. An individual happily engaged is saved from delinquency. The pupils should be guided to experience satisfaction again and again in legitimate recreational activities so that they may choose these outlets as a matter of habit. They should learn the joy of listening to good music, of singing and dancing. They should learn to enjoy physical activities like swimming or walking. They should be taught to derive satisfaction from simple handicrafts, sewing, or weaving, as well as from hobbies like painting, gardening or construction of simple furniture. It is in the physical, not in mental activities, that the retarded group will find their recreation. Artistic and literary pursuits are beyond their reach. Therefore, cultivation of skills in physical activities and pleasure in them are recommended for the backward child. It is also important that the child should learn to enjoy the companionship of others. As he is apt to be suggestible, he should associate with those who are likely to exert wholesome influence on him.

One of the important objectives of education is to enable the pupil to become a happily adjusted wage earner, and to maintain satisfactory relationship with his employer and fellow workers. It is in the development of his manual skill that the retarded child offers the greatest promise of vocational training. As has been already pointed out, school work should mainly consist of manual activities. The school should guide the child from the simplest type of handwork such as stringing beads, building blocks, cutting paper, to higher levels of manual work, which will earn him a living. Even the simplest type of creative activity, such as making a paper envelope, gives the child a great thrill and builds up his self-confidence. As a rule, backward children go into unskilled or semi-

skilled labour. But sometimes this type of a child has special talents in painting or music—which may offer vocational possibilities.

It may be pointed out here that these children need supervision during and after their school period. In America an educational worker usually directs this group out of school, both during and after their school life, in their vocation as well as in recreation.

It may be of interest to note the different jobs for which backward pupils may be trained. One American school for retarded girls reports the following jobs in which its pupils were placed: dress-making, factory work, sweets manufacture, tailoring, manufacture of leather goods, manufacture of auto accessories, domestic work, working as waitresses in restaurants, laundrying, hair-dressing, and store work, such as clerking, filing, labelling, and parcelling.

The boys who went to special classes for backward pupils in a large American city were found in the following occupations: factory work, messenger service, rail road labour, apprenticeship in building trades, auto repair, bus and truck driving, foundry work, jobs in bakeries, tailor's establishments and stores.

The degree of the retarded pupil's success in industry is shown to depend on a number of factors. It depends on whether or not the pupil finds a job suited to his capacity, the degree to which he has developed self-reliance, punctuality, courtesy, obedience, co-operativeness, steadiness and perseverance. It depends also on

the extent to which the home and community foster the development of such traits, and on the tolerance and understanding of the employer.

Given proper education and training, the mentally retarded can become self-supporting and self-respecting citizens. Industry offers them a wide scope for employment. But even more numerous are vocational opportunities for them in agricultural life. Rural pursuits, such as growing food, raising cattle, and various village crafts such as spinning, weaving, basketry, are well within their ability.

India is in great need of special schools for the mentally retarded. These children have no place in our ordinary schools where a pupil is expected to fulfil rigid academic requirements at each grade. To send them to such schools would mean driving them to maladjustment, unhappiness and delinquency. It is necessary, therefore, to put them in special schools, where instruction suited to their needs and capacities can be given. For educational purposes they should be classified into groups. Children of similar age, social maturity and mental age should be grouped together. At least one city in each province should have a special institution where retarded children can be housed, and those that are educable given special instruction.

Proper education of the retarded is a vast and challenging field. It requires well-trained teachers who can teach the child, not just the subject. It requires also schools which aim at the emotional and vocational adjustment of the pupils. Let us not forget the backward child when we reorganize our educational system for the new India.

# THE VEIL OR THE 'PĀRDAH'

G. M. D. SUFI •

## Part II

In the first part of this article, the author, after discussing the history of the veil, came to the conclusion that the seclusion of women is contrary to the spirit of Islam. The full physical and mental development of women is prevented by the evil effects of this system of unhygienic life. The discarding of the *pardah* will remove artificial social barriers and bring women out into a world of wider relationships. The author, in this his second part, suggests some means of amelioration which will rebuild completely the life of Muslim women on a new social basis, free from the extremes of social freedom and without a loss of moral poise.

Dr. Sufi, a retired member of the Central Provinces and Berar Educational Service, formerly Registrar of the University of Delhi, is a keen student of Islamic culture.

The introduction of the *pardah* among Muslims.—When the law of Islam does not allow the type of the *pardah* practised by the Indian Muslim, how was it introduced among the followers of Islam? The question has already been answered, namely, it was through contact with Byzantines, Iranians and Central Asiatics, all neighbours of the Arabs.

The Quran, no doubt, issued a few special rules for the family of the Prophet which was, so to say, the royal or, more appropriately, the noblest family of Medina, and especially menaced by the meddling and gossip of trouble-makers.

The families of the new Islamic state, however, represented the ruling class of a rapidly forming empire, so that it was natural for them to seek a certain amount of aloofness for their women. The ability of the upper classes to withdraw from contact with the common people soon became a mark of distinction, which separated them from the peasants, the subject races and the slaves. The city women sacrificed independence of action to gain social prestige.

The actual *haram* system in Islam, however, commenced under the Umayyad Valid II (742 to 743 A. C.), on account of the influx into Damascus, the capital, of servile classes practising dancing and sing-

ing as their avocations. In imitation of the Byzantine custom, Valid introduced eunuchs into his household. The custom of female seclusion which was in vogue among the Iranians from very early times also made its appearance in the reign of Valid II. Mutawakkil (847 to 861 A. C.), the Nero of the Arabs, writes Ameer Ali,<sup>23</sup> decreed the segregation of the sexes at feasts, and public ceremonies. But women continued to enjoy freedom till under the later Abbasids. "Women mixed with men with dignity and self-respect, held reunions, gave concerts, received visitors, often went to war clad in mail, and helped their brothers and husbands in defending castles against the attacks of enemies."<sup>24</sup> The dignified association of the sexes in Spain gave rise to a delicacy of sentiment and refinement of manners of which, says Ameer Ali, the domiciled Muslim of India in the present day can have but a faint conception.

The veil is believed to have been adopted by the wives of the Caliphs of Baghdad and the great ladies about the court, so that it was a fashion of rank, and thus it spread downwards and outwards. The Caliph Al Qadir-billah (991 to 1031 A. C.), the contemporary of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, "ordered that women must wear a veil when mixing with men

<sup>23</sup> *The Nineteenth Century*, p. 756 (May, 1899).

<sup>24</sup> Ameer Ali, *Short History of the Saracens*, 1899, pp. 198-200.

and appearing in the mosque or other public places."<sup>25</sup>

It is possible also because the society became entirely disintegrated under the attacks of the Tartars. In India, Islam did not take its form direct from the Arabia of the days of the Prophet. It did not take very firm root in Sind at the time of Muhammad bin Qasim. Islam came to India via Iran and Afghanistan. Iran has luckily shaken off the veil to the chagrin of the pseudo-Mujtahid. In Afghanistan the worn-out Mulla still holds some sway.

As Sir Shah Muhammad Sulaiman has pointed out, the Indian Muslim, on account of his forcible entry into this land, had to defend himself and his womenfolk and children, and naturally he was, therefore, forced to take extra care of women, and to put them into a place of assured safety. John J. Pool<sup>26</sup> mentions, and so does Mrs. B. Mir Hasan Ali,<sup>27</sup> the proclamation of Timur in 1398, to his followers to the effect that "as they were now in a strange land of idolatry, and amongst a strange people, the females of their families should be strictly concealed from view." As Dr. K. Muhammad Ashraf<sup>28</sup> points out, before the time of Firuz Shah, no attempt seems to have been made to enforce the *pardah* on the Muslim females of the kingdom. Firuz Shah was the first monarch to forbid the visit of Muslim women to mausoleums outside the city of Delhi in accordance with the Hadith on the subject of women's visits to graveyards.

Nothing is said about the movement of women within the city; probably no restriction was put on them within these bounds. The custom may have spread into

outlying provinces and a respectable lady, therefore, went about in a closed litter or *doli*. We thus have the clue to the additional rigidity of the Indian system of seclusion of women in the Muslim's forcible entry into India, and the use of the heavy *burqa*, a combination of three different garments—the cloak, the head covering, and the *niquab* (in place of the older Indian *ghunghat*, that is, moving the lapel of the Sari, or other head dress, slightly over the face), as compared to the lighter types of the *charshaf* in old Turkey, the *pecheh* in old Iran, the *aba* in Iraq, and the *habarah* in Egypt. The *burqa* comes into use, according to Ameer Ali,<sup>29</sup> towards the close of the Seljuqian period, almost the twelfth century of the Christian era.

This rigidity of the Indian system may have been justified then. It has no justification now. Then, large houses, big compounds, spacious courtyards, and splendid gardens were available for Muslim womenfolk of the courtier and martial classes. The slums of industrial areas with their suffocating, foul air were unknown. It is true, every one did not live in gardens and orchards. Conditions of living were not always very hygienic, but it would not be disputed that the physique of Muslim womenfolk was not so degenerated, and the nature of work and the conditions of life were not so depressing, so nerve-racking.

*Advantage of seclusion.*—It cannot be denied that women living under conditions of seclusion are more sympathetic, more full of grace and dignity and more courteous. A maiden brought up under the *pardah* system is distinguished by remarkable

<sup>25</sup> Betram Thomas, *The Arabs*, London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd., p. 146.

<sup>26</sup> John J. Pool, *Studies in Mohammedanism*, London: Archibald Constable, 1892, p. 36.

<sup>27</sup> Mrs. B. Mir Hasan Ali, *Observations on the Musalmans of India*, Oxford University Press, 1917, p. 170.

<sup>28</sup> *The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 245 (December, 1935).

<sup>29</sup> *The Nineteenth Century*, p. 762 (May, 1899).

sweetness and charm of manner, perfect politeness, and a quaint motherly bearing. The impression to the outsider is that of quiet dignity and refinement, gentleness and grace. The system has also not been quite incompatible with the development of stronger qualities such as force of character and capacity for management. When the young girl, in course of time, as O'Malley<sup>30</sup> says, becomes the head of the family, she shows her capability in social and domestic matters. Many *pardah* women show remarkable shrewdness and judgment in estate management. The *pardah* has been a safeguard of virtue too, though it may have been a fugitive and cloistered virtue. But it must be admitted that the *pardah* keeps a woman in a narrow circle and prevents her full mental development.

*Bud effects on health.*—The lot of women of our middle classes is heart-breaking. They are the real backbone of Muslim population, and yet they are obliged to have recourse to poor living in crowded towns. The middle class woman is confined to a couple of pocky rooms, points out Mrs. Hilla Rustamji, wherein temperature rises to 114 degrees in a day for a part of the year, with no chance of fresh air day in and day out, or any change in the dark and dreary existence throughout the year. The evil effects of this system of unhygienic life on the health of mothers is terrible. The baby is crying, the child is worrying, the husband is pressing for food, the cruel mother-in-law is demanding her 'pound of flesh,' and the foolish sister-in-law is heaping sarcasm and digging up stories of old ancestral rancour. The mother-in-law and the sister-in-law, who welcomed the arrival of the bride and caressed and coaxed her a few days ago, turn into a veritable hell of cruel,

constantly anguishing critics, whose caustic remarks, at every unconscious slip, or an error of omission or commission, are a perpetual source of annoyance and exasperation. No wonder that death and disease should increase by leaps and bounds among these poor, helpless, ignorant women.

The physical welfare of a nation depends upon the health of its women. If a woman is not perfectly healthy, her children also will not be constitutionally perfect, and with a nation of weak women, physical degeneration of a race must result. In the words of the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India, "early marriage, the strain of a rapid succession of pregnancies and periods of lactation, and the *pardah* system with the inherent deprivation of fresh air and exercise which that social system involves, are all factors bound to produce among the younger women of this country a great lowering of resistance to disease which leaves them readily susceptible to acute infections such as tuberculosis. It is not surprising to find that the female mortality rates are higher than the corresponding male rates in the age groups between 15 and 40 years."<sup>31</sup>

The earlier seclusion, including the *burqa* of the Muslim girl, writes Dr. Rose A. Riste,<sup>32</sup> shows its effect in the earlier rise of her tuberculosis death ratio to 44.46 in the 10 to 14 age group as against her Hindu sisters to 18.81. Their brothers' rises were slight: to only 6.88 for the Muslim youth and to 12.70 for the Hindu. A few years later, during the universally critical period of child-bearing, practically all members of these *pardah* families get the full effect of their seclusion, and their death ratio

<sup>30</sup> O'Malley, L. S. S., *India's Social Heritage*, Oxford University Press, 1934.

<sup>31</sup> Report of the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India, 1932, p. 87.

<sup>32</sup> Riste, Rose A., "Tuberculosis in the Zenana," *The Indian Medical Gazette*, p. 555, (September, 1938).

soars. "More and more the *zanāna* looms as the gravest source of infection and the most tuberculosis-ridden. Dr. Rose A. Riste, then, pleads that these young human flowers be not confined and restricted just as they are blossoming out into womanhood and need more of the life-giving elements of sunshine, fresh air, and exercise which are their natural inheritance offered by merciful God but denied by cruel man.

Dr. Lankaster,<sup>33</sup> conducted a two years' inquiry into the prevalence of tuberculosis in India. He states that, in the course of his tour through the cities of India, no single fact was more constantly brought to his notice by ceaseless reiteration than the direct dependence of consumption upon the system of *pardah* or the seclusion of women. The phthisis death-rate for Muslim women in Calcutta was 5.80 per mille as against 3.00 for Hindus, and in one crowded Muslim ward of the city it reached the startling figure of 12.80 per mille. Dr. Lankaster, however, found that in districts where both Hindus and Muslims keep their women in seclusion, the latter suffer less from consumption owing to their superior physique and more nourishing food. As Lady Linlithgow points out, "Tuberculosis is a silent and cunning foe and, unless it is discovered and dealt with at a very early stage, the patient often succumbs to it, and which, in medical reports, often goes under the heading: 'Death from disease of the chest'."

Dr. K. Vaughan<sup>34</sup> attributes most of the trouble in child-birth in India to the *pardah* system. Rickets from which English women and children suffer, through lack of air and sunlight in the slums, reminded Dr. Vaughan of the anaemia of Indian women in *pardah*. Osteomalacia, or the disease of the bones, leads to crippling

and pelvic deformities which cause great suffering and loss of life in child-birth. A well-developed pelvis is as much important to a woman as a well-developed chest.

Speaking about the helplessness of, *pardah-nashin* ladies, Her Highness the Maharani of Baroda, in her presidential address to the All-India Women's Conference of Educational Reform (1927), remarks: "Suppose, for instance, that a Rani were, with her own eyes, to see her child poisoned? Could she insist upon a post-mortem? Would her voice of agonized sorrow at the deed ever penetrate beyond the *pardah*? This is but typical of the monumental brutality of the *zanāna* system which wastes one half of the human race and jeopardizes the future of the other half."

Women who are caged and harassed in Indian Muslim homes are apt to be timid, nervous and always dependent on others "down to a boy of seven." Mothers living under such unhealthy conditions naturally breed a race lacking stamina and affected with an inferiority complex. On top of it, there is malnutrition due to poverty in Muslim lower middle classes, and this is the worst enemy of physical fitness. Muhammad Marmduke Pickthall, the translator of the Quran, was quite right when he said that the "status to which the great majority of Muslim women are reduced today, is a libel on Islam, a crime for which the Muslim community, as a whole, will have to suffer in increasing mortality so long as that crime is perpetrated." Should not, therefore, one feel ashamed at the just remarks of Rosita Forbes when she says: "We passed a Muslim woman, a white tent walking quickly. I wondered if she enjoyed her

<sup>33</sup> Lankaster, *Tuberculosis in India*, 1920.

<sup>34</sup> Vaughan, Kathleen Olga, *The Pardah System and its effect on Motherhood*, 1928.

privacy, if it amused her to be a secret in the publicity of Peshawar.....contemptuous perhaps of the freedom she had no desire to share."

"Truly the dust of Hindustan has covered the laws of Muslims and disfigures the entire system of justice and tolerance given by their Prophet. The spirit of disgrace that hovers over the Hindu widow casts its shadow on the neighbours as well. And as man is more afraid of his own shadow than of good, he gives more importance to manufactured laws than to the dictates of the Prophet, and whatever a woman's ability may be, she cannot escape the indignity."<sup>35</sup>

• Women are to be confined to the house, no doubt, but when? The Quran explains it: "As for those of your women who are guilty of lewdness, call to witness four of you against them. And if they testify (to the truth of the allegation) then confine them to the houses until death take them or (until) Allah appoint for them a way (through new legislation) — *An Nisa*, Surah IV, 15. This 'new legislation' is discussed in *An Nur*, Surah XXIV, 2-10. Is not the Mulla type Musalman behaving towards all chaste, innocent women in this manner which the Quran enjoins only in respect of women guilty of lewdness?

Islam does not prevent woman from the use of the high heel though it is far from hygienic—or the lip-stick, the powder or other cosmetics for personal decoration, but let her do all this in privy to her life-partner, but not on the every day, open stage of life where she would thus become a personification of sex-appeal to every looker-on and to every passerby. Physiological reasons on account of climate make it necessary to regulate more strictly the social life of man and woman in the East than

in the West. Maturity of life comes sooner in the East, and, with it, greater excitability on account of obvious climatic differences. Islam is intended both for the East and for the West. It has, therefore, not to ignore the East. Restrictions on the free and absolutely unfettered intercourse of the two sexes in Islam is, as a corollary, a judicious desirability.

Promiscuous intermingling of men and women with its attendant jealousies, culminating in free fights, fraud and murder is contrary to the spirit of Islam. Decency in behaviour and decorum in dress are virtues in women. Undue licence and unrestricted liberty are vices in women. In the words of Anthony M. Ludovici, a deep student of the psychology of women, "The relaxation of morals, the loss of discipline and virtue and the decline of authority and order in any state has always preceded feminine emancipation: it is always a consequence or accompanying symptom of lower morals and lower discipline and lower virtue."

The Prophet's word and his example, his laws of inheritance and divorce are sufficient testimony that he exalted women. He declared he loved three things best: (i) the adoration of God, (ii) affection to women, and (iii) enjoyment of perfume. Enough has been said to show that Islam does not treat woman as the Indian Muslim treats her. Islam does not impose, or connive at, the crushing, stupefying, soul-killing restrictions on women as does the old-fashioned Mulla, the careless merchant, or the easy-going territorial magnate, the busy professional or the down-trodden wage-earner in India.

*Means of amelioration.* — We have discussed the evils of the *pardah* system. Shall we now discuss the means of amelioration?



(i) The foremost is, of course, the widespread diffusion of education. This is the successful torpedo against the dreadnought of ignorance, and this is the powder to blast the hard rock of illiteracy. The education of a man means the education of an individual, but the education of a woman means the education of the family, that is to say, the proper upbringing of children, enlightenment of the home, and healthy influence over relatives and neighbours. The measure of a people's civilization is the standard of their women. Women's education is, therefore, the first condition of progress. As no nation can rise above the level of its women, it is the backwardness of our womanhood that keeps us back. Compare any two women, and you feel the difference in the upbringing of their children. Money is a great factor no doubt. But it is the education of our girls that will bring about a higher standard of health and comfort both in villages and in towns. Custom and tradition are in the hands of women, and until they agree to change them, as Brayne<sup>36</sup> says, men are helpless; and why should women allow changes until they are educated to realize the necessity for them in the changed circumstances of modern life?

(ii) Next in importance comes the meetings of women. Isolation of a woman from a woman is a hindrance to the development of thought and corporate action. If each woman is tied to the kitchen, to the child, to the husband, to the home, to the cow-dung and to the cold cactus for fire and fuel, she has no relaxation, no recreation, no healthy mind, and no cheerful outlook on life. She is like the bird accustomed to the cage. Even if you put it out, the bird will revolve round the cage and find contentment in the cage alone. Women

institutes, as outlined by Brayne,<sup>37</sup> are an admirable means of women's awakening. In very small places, the elementary school for girls can afford a ready club-house for the purpose. In large towns and cities *pardah* clubs and *pardah* parks will establish wider contact among women.

(iii) Propaganda in the press through persuasion of sensible editors and publicists and on the platform through enlightened preachers should be directed to disarming opposition to the free movement of women properly dressed and to the accompaniment of their fathers, husbands, brothers or sons, or under suitably chaperoned conditions. We should, however, guard against the type of the modern Maulavi, who, though scholarly and intelligent, trying rationally to interpret the Quran, is yet obsessed when he comes to the freedom of Muslim women. His lack of wide travel and slavish dependence on stray abnormally sensational cases of sex here and there, together with certain statistics of illegitimacy, make him nervous and cloud his vision, resulting in his denial of freedom to Muslim women. His argument is puerile. He says because Islam confers very great rights on the Muslim women—greater than any other religion—therefore, Muslim women ought to be kept in the *pardah*! How he wrecks his great scholarship, his keen intelligence and his otherwise usually convincing interpretation of the Quran, on the frail veil of Muslim women! Instead of preaching, in the spirit of Islam, to fight the evil, he fights shy of the evil and counsels despair. He starts with the freshness and the vigour and vitality of Islam but ends with the resignation and renunciation of Buddhism and Christianity! He does not consider, for a moment, that the Prophet of Islam who confers such great benefit on women,

<sup>36</sup> Brayne, F. L., *Better Villages*, Bombay : Oxford University Press, 1937, p. 113.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 124-8.

would condemn her to such seclusion as the Indian Musalman imposes on his womenfolk. Such a thing is indeed incompatible with the whole trend and tenor of his teachings and of the teachings of Islam.

Pandit Krishna Prasad Kaul of the 'Servants of India Society, Lucknow, has quite an interesting comment on our Mullas and Mujtahids in this respect. Some years back, His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad visited Lucknow when several social and public functions were held in his honour in the city. The ladies of the Nizam's family, discarding the *pardah*, used to go about and mix with the people in those functions freely. When the Nizam paid a visit to the Muslim Girls' School, founded by the late Justice Karamat Husain, the students and the teachers came out of the *pardah* and accorded him a hearty welcome. 'None of the Maulanas, Mujtahids or even our local Urdu newspapers uttered a single word of disparagement against this open breach of a time-honoured custom.' If we twist these great divines and publicists on keeping mum, we shall hear that that was a special occasion which warranted silence on their part. But if we tell them that old times have changed and the age demands new adjustments, they will not agree! Pandit Kaul also quoted the case of the successful Muslim woman candidate in an election at an open reception in her honour and her garlanding in a motley Muslim crowd!<sup>38</sup>

(iv) Above all, Muslim conservatives should learn that every unveiled woman is not vicious. She is, and can be, quite as chaste as women inside the *pardah*.

(v) Muslim ladies who have discarded the *pardah* should continue to set an example of modesty. Their behaviour should be an inspiring illustration of the

proper use of freedom from the shackles of the *haram*, for a slight scandal here and there warns the conservative to tighten this freedom of our entire womenfolk; and the movement for female emancipation receives a rude shock, a severe set-back and forces back to seclusion the wavering and the hesitant.

(vi) Contact with ladies of sister communities will be a great corrective and eye-opener to Muslim women, especially when they meet cultured and travelled ladies of this land and of other lands.

(vii) The growing use of excursions, a habit of travel to places of interest by means of cheap railway return tickets, will increasingly open the eyes of our womenfolk to the desire for discarding the *pardah*.

(viii) Special impetus to the discarding of the veil can be given by encouraging the employment of Muslim women of education and character to posts of responsibility especially in the educational, medical and judicial services—the last as advocated by Iman Abu Hanifa, the greatest of the earliest jurists of Islam, so many centuries ago. One official lady of character in an important post is an effective inducement to twenty to come out of the veil and take their rightful place in society.

(ix) Sometimes, tactless talk of discarding the *pardah* provokes undesirable controversy in the press and on the platform, and makes the Mulla type write a pamphlet and quote the Quran, the Hadith and certain *aqwal*, and cite his own misunderstood, undesirable experiences and stories of film stars. Earnest workers may avoid such tactlessness. Example is better than precept.

<sup>38</sup> Vide p. 10 of his pamphlet on Indian women.

• Considering the progress, though not quite satisfactory, in education among Muslim women in India, it appears that the *pardah* has to go. Let it go with a grace. The discarding of the *pardah* is not anti-religious, it is not anti-Islamic. This *pardah* was not practised in the Prophet's time. What he enjoined was modesty for women. He never prescribed the prison for them. The *pardah* is certainly anti-ecclesiastical and anti-orthodox. It is anti-Mulla. It is anti-Mujtahid. The Mulla has gone from Turkey. The Mujtahid has gone from Iran. Let the *pardah* also go with them. The Muslim damsel was safe. The Muslim damsel is safe. The Muslim damsel will be safe. Only, let the Musalman be sensible, strong and chivalrous. Let him be fair to the fairer sex, as was the great Founder of the faith. What a shame that the Muslim should not follow the great Prophet in the liberal attitude to women, but ape the enthralling rigidity of the Abbasid, Al Qadir-billah, or others of that ilk. Can he call himself a true follower of the great Muhammad? Did not the Prophet of Islam raise the position of women at a time when women had sunk down in the scale of humanity the world over, and in all religions then existing? Is not the Musalman - the follower of the same Prophet - responsible for the sinking down of the woman in these days of universal enlightenment and freedom? What a contrast? Is this Islam founded by the respected Rasul? When will conservative Muslims realize this? If they do that they are sure to elevate themselves, sweeten

the lives of millions of their women and, what is most important, of all, they will make their future generations healthy, strong, educated and useful members of their own and of world society, and make a worthy contribution to the culture of the age to come. England was the first to give rights to women amongst Western nations and she reaped the greatest benefit before others.

Up to the early part of the eighteenth century, Russian women of rank were kept confined within the walls of the *terem* (women's apartments); "they vegetated, deprived of light and air, in rooms which were half dungeon and half cell, behind windows covered with thick curtains, and heavily padlocked doors. There was no means of separate exit. The only way of getting out was through the father's or husband's room, and the father or the husband kept the keys in his pocket, or under his pillow."<sup>39</sup> Women were carried about in closed conveyances muffled with coverings. Russia has changed. It has conferred on woman equality with man. May we hope that the Indian Musalman who does not find himself, at present, very dissimilar from the *terem* days of Russia, does not remain far behind for long, in conferring proper freedom on his women, and thus bringing about his own salvation and the uplift and the elevation of his own children, and thereby let us hope that the Muslim will prove himself to be a credit to Islam and to the country he lives in!

<sup>39</sup> *The Nineteenth Century*, p. 774 (May, 1899).

# WAGES AND CONCESSIONS IN OUR TEA PLANTATIONS

SUDHENDU NARAYAN MUKHOPADHYAY

The plantation industries, especially the cultivation of tea, are of vital importance to our national economy. The extension of these industries will give the country an opportunity to make use of its vast labour forces. But, so far, the welfare of the workers in plantations has not received adequate attention. The extremely low wage rates and the grant of arbitrary concessions have led to a widespread feeling of unrest among tea garden labour. The following article gives a detailed analysis of wages and concessions in tea plantations in India.

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*Wage systems.*—Wage system on the tea plantations is essentially and predominantly a system of paying on a piece rate basis, paying in proportion to the jobs done, or by results. A price is set on the job, and the employer pays not so much per hour to the workers employed on the job, but a certain amount for the job itself.

“The *hazira* and *ticca*,” and “the Unit,” are the two distinct systems followed. Both the systems are found to be in force in the same garden at one and the same time. In different seasons, for different operations, different systems are employed, e.g., for plucking the unit system is universally employed, whereas for pruning and hoeing the *hazira* system is the most common one, except in the busy season when hoeing is remunerated on the piece done. Of the two, the *hazira* and *ticca* system is the older. The unit system was started about twenty-five years ago in the Darrang district and has since been introduced in the gardens of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. The *hazira* system is greatly being replaced by the unit method. Under the *hazira* and *ticca* system the labourers are required to complete a standard daily task, requiring not less than five to seven hours in Assam and four and six hours in the Dooars and Darjeeling. Every man, woman or child, in order to earn the *hazira*, must complete some measured work fixed by the employer. If the work is completed before time, the labourer begins extra work for which he is paid extra

wages. The workers are at liberty to go to their homes on the completion of their *hazira* but, whenever an opportunity is presented, they, generally, almost universally, continue the work after the *hazira* and try to earn more by working overtime, which is named *ticca*. *Ticca* work is often paid at an enhanced rate, on the analogy of overtime earnings in other industries. There are obvious limitations to the possibilities of *ticca* earnings. The employers rigorously follow the rule of maximum efficiency at the minimum cost and do not spend on more hoeing or pruning than is absolutely necessary. The larger the labour force, the lesser is the opportunity for earning the *ticca*. Again, during the slump, expenditure is curtailed and a lower standard of cultivation is resorted to, and *ticca* work is restricted. From 1931 to 1940, due to the restriction in output and rise of surplus labour on the estates, the *ticca* earnings stood at an extremely low level forming about five per cent of the earnings of a labourer. In war years, from 1940 to 1945, however, the employers adopted the policy of making more *ticca* work available to the labourers and, as a result of this policy, substantial increase took place in the *ticca* earnings being twenty per cent to twenty-five per cent in majority of the cases. In the dull season the scope for *ticca* work is very limited and very often the worker is not allowed to work for all the six days; in the busy season, during peak production days, the labourer can earn

*ticca*. During the last three years, the *ticca* earnings of the labourers have risen considerably, and often cover as much as fifty per cent of the total earnings. This is mainly due to the increased war production and reduction in the number of labourers caused by the employment of labourers for various war projects.

In the Dooars, the standard of daily task is fixed at a lower level and the time required in working out one *hazira* scarcely exceeds four to six hours. It is said that the planters sought to check increments in wages by reducing the basic *hazira* rate and at the same time introducing the second and the third *haziras*. The extra time for which the labourer works is recorded as the second and the third *haziras*. The piece work to be done for the second and the third *haziras* are also less. The rate of payment for each *hazira* is four annas for an adult male, three annas for an adult female, and one anna and six pies for each child. There are very few gardens, however, where the amount of task for the second and the third *haziras* is less than that for the first *hazira*. In the majority of the gardens the task for the first, the second and the third *haziras* is the same in actual practice. The policy of maintaining more than one *hazira* piece is continued, as it allows the employer to escape a higher rate of pay for *ticca*.

Under the unit system, payment is made for each unit of work and the only difference in practice is that no fixed task is demanded from the workers. The coolies have unlimited opportunities of earning, and they know beforehand what their earnings will be for an equivalent amount of work done. Generally, one anna is fixed for one unit of work. Under the old *hazira* system a man had to do a specified quantity, as a prescribed minimum, say about four annas worth, before he could expect to be paid at all. Under the unit system it is open to him to stop work when he chooses. Payment

is made weekly under this system, as it is believed that this practice tends to mitigate the evil of indebtedness among the labourers in so far as a coolie, earning ready money weekly, is perhaps less likely to require advances from the garden or from money lenders. It is also claimed that the unit system makes it easier to reduce quotas of work to be set to individual workers, whenever such a course is considered necessary or advisable, besides facilitating the correct maintenance of the wage registers. The system is most often resorted to in the busy season when in the interest of the employers the speed of work should be intensified simultaneously with prolonged hours of work. The earnings in this season, therefore, attain a higher level. In both these cases, however, the worker, while he earns more, is not necessarily earning any more in proportion to the energy he is spending. If he is working more intensely for longer hours, he is incurring greater fatigue and spending more energy.

*The rates of wages.* - The rates of wages vary from district to district, season to season, and operation to operation. The wage rates and the task fixed for *hazira* vary considerably with the season, soil and plant; e.g., during the rainy season hoeing is not a difficult task as compared with what it is in the cold weather when the soil is so hard. Again, one garden might require one type of hoeing while another might demand a different sort of hoeing. Hoeing, plucking, pruning, forking, manuring, and weeding are the main types of agricultural operations on the estates. The task of hoeing is exclusively performed by men. For medium and thirty inch head-back pruning and manuring only adult males are employed. Females are considered physically unfit for such tasks. Women are engaged mostly in plucking, light pruning or skiffing, forking, and weeding. The children are employed mostly

in forking and weeding and in the nursery. From April to November, women are exclusively employed in plucking. Hoeing, pruning, and manuring are mostly done by men in this season. Children engage themselves in forking and weeding. Large numbers of children pluck leaves with their mothers. They contribute to the same basket, and leaves are weighed together and recorded against their mother's name. Towards the end and in the beginning of the plucking season, when plucking does not absorb so many women, they generally take up forking and pruning, in addition to plucking; and children are driven to tasks in the nursery and other miscellaneous activities. During December, January and February, plucking is almost stopped and women fall upon pruning and forking, and in a number of estates they also take up hoeing, although it is extremely arduous and females are supposed to be absolutely unfit for it.

To facilitate the task of enumeration, the year has been divided into two broad divisions, namely, the busy season, from April to November, and the slack season, from November to March; and the rates which must be accordingly different are given below.

*The rates of wages in the slack season in Assam.*—In the slack season, deep hoeing of twelve to sixteen *nals* of ground constitutes one *hazira* and is worth five to six annas in the Assam Valley, and four to five annas in the Surma Valley. A number of eighty to one hundred and twenty plants are to be lightly pruned for one *hazira* and it will bring three to four annas. Heavy pruning of fifty to sixty plants is remunerated with three to five annas. During this season, due to the hardness of the ground, in one hour one female worker can complete forking of thirty to forty plants and is paid four pice for it. One child has to fork twenty to thirty plants per hour and eighty

to one hundred and twenty plants in one *hazira* and is given two to three pice per hour. Pruning cannot be entrusted to all women; previous apprenticeship and a certain amount of alacrity and muscular strength are needed. A woman forks twenty plants for two pice and earns three annas to three and a half annas per diem. But pruning is more remunerative; she can prune about twenty plants in an hour and is paid three pice for it. Her daily earnings then amount to four or four and a half annas. If plants are small, the payment is two pice per twenty plants. In the case of "down pruning" the rate is four pice to five pice per twenty bushes. About one-eighth of the total number of bushes, or acreage under cultivation, is down pruned each year and one-fourth of the garden plants are slashed each year in order that shoots might appear earlier on them. In the whole of Lakhimpur, pruning is done on piece rate basis, one *nal* one pice. This, of course, varies from garden to garden.

During this non-plucking season, children mostly work in the nursery for three to four hours receiving two to three annas per diem. They prepare the ground, provide sheds for the young plants, collect bamboos and other raw materials from the jungle for making sheds. They also water the plants. The task of weeding and forking being largely transferred to women, children are scarcely employed for these operations. Those children, who are not provided work in the nursery, tend cows, kill birds, collect fuel and perform other domestic tasks. During this period, the family earnings greatly diminish and extreme poverty prevails among the workers.

*The rates of wages in the busy season in Assam.*—In the busy season, one man has to complete light hoeing of thirty-five to forty-five *nals* in one *hazira* and receives four to five annas. The ground must be hoed as early as possible after the rain has

set in. The employer, therefore, generally has much interest in long working hours, extension of overtime and increased intensity of work. Hence, the unit system is introduced for light hoeing. No *tucca* work is possible after deep hoeing; but when hoeing is light the labourer can do *tucca* work according to actual conditions.

Forking of thirty to forty plants can be completed in less than one hour for which two to three pice is paid, and for one *hazira*, one hundred and eighty to two hundred and thirty plants are to be covered. Generally, forking is practised from December to April. Before the rain sets in, the *hazira* rate for forking is one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty plants. In soft ground, in three hours, one hundred and twenty plants can be forked, whereas, in hard soil, the same number of plants require five to six hours. The rate of payment, however, remains the same.

For fine plucking, the actual rate is one pice per seer and ten annas per maund. Plucking is mostly done on piece or unit basis. In the beginning and in the end of the plucking season, i.e., in May, June and November, "coarse" plucking is done and eight annas per maund is the rate. When "coarse" plucking is done, a woman can earn at a higher rate than when the plucking is fine. From April to June, one rupee is paid for each maund. From June to November, for fine plucking, nine annas to ten annas per maund is paid. A good plucker can earn as much as one rupee per day. On some estates in Assam even twelve to sixteen annas per maund is paid. For a very short period only, say for a month or so, the leaves are plucked coarse. For one month, i.e., three or four rounds in March or April, one worker cannot pluck more than twenty pounds in eight to nine hours. During these days, the labourer gets wages

by *hazira* system and women are paid at the rate of three annas to four annas per *hazira*. When the flushes are plenty and one can pluck more than twenty pounds, the unit system is adopted for payment.

- The children are mostly employed for forking and weeding. Thirty to forty plants are forked in an hour and one hundred and twenty to one hundred and sixty plants forked would make up one *hazira*, the remuneration being two and a half annas to three annas. From December to March, they can accomplish only twenty to thirty plants in an hour and are paid two pice for it. In the plucking season, if a child brings ten pounds in his quota of leaves, he receives an amount equivalent to one *hazira* of a woman, i.e., three annas. During this season, more than fifty per cent of the children pluck and contribute leaves to the basket of their mothers. Grown-up children are paid at two annas to two and a half annas per *hazira* and they clear off the weeds of seventy to eighty plants, requiring four to five hours.

During the course of the year, the wage rate per hour for an adult male labourer scarcely exceeds one anna, irrespective of the nature of the task and the condition of the work. In the case of the woman, for about four months, December, January, February and March, when she is engaged in light pruning and forking, the rate of her earnings falls considerably below one anna per hour and during the rest of the year, when she is mostly engaged in plucking, it is generally one anna per hour.

In the South, in tea plantations, the rate for leaf plucking was uniform until 1942, being three pice per pound of leaf plucked. After 1942, varying rates are paid from district to district and even from estate

to estate. The rates vary from three to four pies per pound. Many estates pay three pies per pound in the months of heavy flush and four pies in the slack season. In some estates the procedure is to pay four pies per pound during any month when the plucking average per worker per day falls below sixteen pounds.

*The rates of payments in the Dooars.*—In the Dooars, the tasks vary according to the circumstances. For deep hoeing, the usual *hazira* task is twelve to fifteen *lugees*, and for light hoeing it is twenty-five to forty *lugees*. The worker will receive four annas for it. A *lugee* measures 12 ft. × 12 ft. A strong coolie could perform his task in the rains in about five hours. He would take longer on hard soil in dry weather. An inferior coolie might take half as long again. In pruning, the rate varies according to the size and age of the bushes and the style adopted. The skiffing of about three hundred to four hundred bushes would represent the average task requiring six to seven hours, though a good worker might finish it in five hours or even less; only ten to fifteen bushes can be heavily pruned in one *hazira*, while sixty to eighty bushes can be covered in medium pruning. Forking with manuring of one hundred and fifty bushes is paid three annas, and it takes about six hours. The pluckers are actually paid one pice per seer, though it is said that one pice a pound is the rate. The illiterate coolies take one seer as equivalent to one pound and hence are cheated. A good plucker working nine hours a day in the height of the season can double his or her monthly wages and in some instances can exceed even this. And, for three months in the year, he or she can earn six or seven rupees more per month.

At high elevations in the Nilgiris, the system of cultivation is peculiar. Like Darjeeling, there is no severe labour in the

form of hoeing which would be ruinous to the soil on the steep hill sides. Plucking continues more or less throughout the year. Ten pounds represent the average amount plucked throughout the season on an estate at six thousand feet. In May, June and July, the task varies from twelve to fifteen pounds; two to three pice per pound being paid for *ticca*. The bushes are not pruned every year, but every two to three years on the average.

*The rates of wages for the factory workers.*—The factory employs only about five to ten per cent of the total labour force on an estate. The average number of factory workers in Assam was 43,737 in 1939 and 44,286 in 1940. The total wages paid being Rs. 38,07,383/- in 1939 and Rs. 37,80,411/- in 1940. The average income per annum was calculated to be eighty-seven rupees in 1939 and eighty-six rupees in 1940.<sup>1</sup> The engine man working on daily wage basis receives five annas and six pies per day working eight to ten hours; those who work on monthly wage basis receive thirteen to fifteen rupees per month. Everybody is granted four days leave per month. Rollers and fermenters receive about six annas per day of eight hours. Women sorters receive five to six annas per maund of sorted tea. They generally can sort one and a half maund of tea in a day and receive seven annas and six pies. Those who attend the firing machines get six to twelve annas, working for ten to eleven hours per day. They get the highest pay among the factory workers. The task of firing is the most strenuous and the labourer is granted one hour leave after every four hours of work. In Darjeeling four annas per woman is paid for sorting tea. Other labourers in the factory are employed on a monthly payment basis, the rate being nine to ten rupees per month. In the Dooars, nine to twelve rupees is the monthly wage rate in the

<sup>1</sup> Report on the Working of the Factories Act in Assam, 1940.



factory. The overtime work is paid on a higher scale. The Factories Act prohibits the employment of children in the factory. But a large number of children are employed, and their names are entered in the registers as women workers though they are paid at lower rates, two annas per day. In the Nilgiris, the factory hands receive eight rupees or upward per month.

*Earnings and variations in earnings.*—As is usual with the agricultural workers in India, the family, and not the single worker, is the bread winner. On all tea estates, men, women and children are employed throughout the year with seasonal variations in their ratio. Their contribution to the family income, therefore, is not confined to any specific period as is the case in other

agricultural industries.

The following four tables compiled from the *Annual Reports on the Working of the Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act* show the average monthly cash earnings per worker on the books and average monthly wages of settled and casual labourers separately for men, women and children and for the Assam and the Surma Valleys. In tables I, II, III, and IV, the figures in columns 2, 3, and 4 have been obtained by dividing the total monthly cash earnings by the total number of labourers on the books. The average monthly wages (columns 5, 6 and 7) have been obtained by dividing the total monthly cash earnings by the average daily working strength.

TABLE I  
Average Earnings of Settled Labourers on Tea Estates in the Assam Valley for the Months of March and September, 1934-44.

Year	Average monthly cash earnings per worker on the books									Average monthly wages									Average daily cash earnings per day or part of the day worked								
	Men			Women			Children			Men			Women			Children			Men			Women			Children		
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.
1933-34 ...	7	7	7	5	14	4	4	3	8										0	5	10	0	4	10	0	3	5
1934-35 ...	7	2	11	5	7	3	3	5	3										0	5	6	0	4	6	0	3	1
1935-36 ...	6	13	2	5	10	4	4	0	2										0	5	4	0	4	4	0	3	2
1936-37 ...	7	3	5	5	13	7	4	4	7										0	5	6	0	4	8	0	3	4
1937-38 ...	7	1	9	5	13	4	4	3	4										0	5	4	0	4	7	0	3	4
1938-39 ...	7	15	3	6	7	5	4	0	2										0	5	8	0	5	2	0	3	5
1939-40 ...	7	14	1	6	3	8	4	7	0	9	8	7	8	8	4	5	14	6	0	5	11	0	5	2	0	3	4
1940-41 ...	8	2	1	6	8	4	4	10	11	10	0	11	8	11	6	6	4	9	0	5	10	0	4	9	0	3	7
1941-42 ...	8	11	5	7	2	10	5	4	4	10	15	3	10	7	10	6	14	10	0	7	0	0	5	10	0	3	10
1942-43 ...	8	10	4	6	15	4	5	4	2	10	9	0	9	7	0	6	11	2	0	7	2	0	5	10	0	4	0
1943-44 ...	9	10	3	7	13	1	5	14	10	12	6	4	10	12	3	7	9	1	0	8	2	0	6	10	0	4	8

# WAGES AND CONCESSIONS IN OUR TEA PLANTATIONS

## TABLE II

Average Earnings of *faltu* or *basti* Labourers on Tea Estates in the Assam Valley for the Months of March and September, 1934-44.

Year 1	Average monthly cash earnings per worker on the books			Average monthly wages			Average daily cash earnings per day or part of the day worked		
	Men	Women	Children	Men	Women	Children	Men	Women	Children
	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.
1933-34 ...	4 7 3	4 7 10	2 11 3				0 4 3	0 4 1	0 2 10
1934-35 ...	4 6 11	4 6 9	2 11 11				0 4 6	0 4 1	0 2 9
1935-36 ...	4 9 6	4 9 2	2 14 2				0 4 5	0 4 1	0 2 8
1936-37 ...	4 9 6	4 4 6	3 0 7				0 4 6	0 4 1	0 3 2
1937-38 ...	4 11 10	4 7 2	3 6 2				0 4 7	0 4 1	0 3 3
1938-39 ...	5 2 1	5 1 10	3 5 1				0 5 2	0 4 5	0 3 2
1939-40 ...	4 15 1	5 1 9	3 5 7	8 4 9	8 12 2	5 9 5	0 4 10	0 4 8	0 3 4
1940-41 ...	4 14 2	5 15 0	3 0 10	7 11 8	7 10 2	5 1 4	0 5 0	0 4 10	0 3 2
1941-42 ...	5 15 10	5 10 1	3 8 11	9 8 5	9 0 2	6 0 0	0 6 0	0 4 9	0 3 5
1942-43 ...	6 6 5	5 13 7	3 13 5	10 15 6	9 11 11	6 2 0	0 6 11	0 5 8	0 3 8
1943-44 ...	3 4 7	6 4 3	4 3 3	12 5 8	10 15 6	6 6 4	0 8 7	0 6 6	0 4 4

## TABLE III

Average Earnings of Settled Labourers on Tea Estates in the Surma Valley for the Months of March and September, 1934-44.

Year 1	Average monthly cash earnings per worker on the books			Average monthly wages			Average daily cash earnings per day or part of the day worked		
	Men	Women	Children	Men	Women	Children	Men	Women	Children
	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.
1933-34 ...	5 6 3	3 11 10	2 10 2				0 3 8	0 2 7	0 1 10
1934-35 ...	5 10 9	3 12 4	2 11 5				0 3 4	0 2 10	0 2 1
1935-36 ...	5 12 11	4 0 1	2 13 7				0 3 10	0 2 9	0 2 0
1936-37 ...	5 10 11	4 1 10	2 12 9				0 3 9	0 2 9	0 1 11
1937-38 ...	6 2 5	4 4 1	2 15 2				0 4 0	0 2 11	0 1 11
1938-39 ...	6 5 6	4 5 6	3 2 2				0 4 3	0 3 3	0 2 3
1939-40 ...	6 4 7	4 7 3	3 1 8	8 0 0	6 4 11	4 6 4	0 5 0	0 4 2	0 2 9
1940-41 ...	5 8 10	4 12 4	3 3 5	6 15 2	6 13 0	4 7 3	0 5 8	0 4 9	0 2 10
1941-42 ...	6 15 0	5 7 1	2 11 0	9 2 8	8 3 4	5 0 7	0 5 11	0 4 11	0 3 2
1942-43 ...	7 4 3	5 7 2	3 8 6	9 7 9	7 11 3	4 11 6	0 6 8	0 4 9	0 3 3
1943-44 ...	7 13 7	5 10 6	3 12 10	10 5 4	8 6 1	5 4 0	0 6 7	0 5 2	0 3 2

TABLE IV

Average Earnings of *faltu* or *basti* Labourers on Tea Estates in the Surma Valley for the Months of March and September, 1934-44.

Year	Average monthly cash earnings per worker on the books			Average monthly wages			Average daily cash earnings per day or part of the day worked		
	Men	Women	Children	Men	Women	Children	Men	Women	Children
	Rs. as. ps. 2	Rs. as. ps. 3	Rs. as. ps. 4	Rs. as. ps. 5	Rs. as. ps. 6	Rs. as. ps. 7	Rs. as. ps. 8	Rs. as. ps. 9	Rs. as. ps. 10
1933-34	4 2 10	3 10 10	2 1 2				0 2 5	0 2 4	0 1 5
1934-35	4 5 1	3 5 8	2 2 7				0 2 9	0 2 5	0 2 0
1935-36	4 4 8	3 5 3	2 2 4				0 3 0	0 2 5	0 1 8
1936-37	4 8 7	3 3 2	2 3 7				0 3 0	0 2 5	0 1 7
1937-38	4 14 3	3 1 5	2 3 8				0 3 5	0 2 7	0 1 11
1938-39	4 7 5	3 7 3	2 5 3				0 3 1	0 2 8	0 2 1
1939-40	4 2 8	3 7 3	2 6 5	7 5 9	5 8 3	4 6 0	0 4 8	0 3 8	0 2 4
1940-41	4 10 8	3 7 10	2 6 4	7 11 9	5 14 11	3 12 11	0 5 1	0 4 2	0 2 9
1941-42	5 3 6	3 9 4	2 11 0	9 5 6	6 3 11	4 15 10	0 5 3	0 3 11	0 3 0
1942-43	5 12 0	4 0 1	2 10 9	8 14 10	6 9 9	3 14 10	0 5 10	0 4 4	0 2 5
1943-44	7 2 4	4 5 5	3 3 11	12 1 0	7 14 9	5 3 2	0 6 6	0 4 10	0 2 10

The following tables illustrate the average monthly cash earnings arrived at by dividing the total earnings by the average working strength in nine of the sampled gardens in the Dooars in 1940 and 1944 and in five gardens each in the Terai and Darjeeling in 1939 and 1944.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE V

Average Monthly Earnings in certain Gardens in the Dooars in 1940 and 1944.

Garden	1940			1944		
	Men Rs. as. ps.	Women Rs. as. ps.	Children Rs. as. ps.	Men Rs. as. ps.	Women Rs. as. ps.	Children Rs. as. ps.
A	10 0 2	6 5 0	3 15 2	15 9 0	10 5 9	6 6 9
B	8 0 0	6 2 7	2 7 0	14 14 5	10 12 0	3 5 3
C	7 9 7	6 7 4		12 1 3	8 11 11	3 4 6
D	9 10 1	7 0 0	2 8 6	14 13 1	8 8 8	3 6 1
E	7 0 0	5 0 0	1 8 0	11 0 0	7 0 0	2 0 0
F	10 3 2	6 12 2	3 8 10	13 9 1	10 1 0	4 15 0
G	9 0 8	6 3 2	2 8 8	10 7 4	8 0 0	3 2 0
H	9 9 9	6 3 6	3 1 3	16 9 7	10 10 9	4 13 5
I	7 14 7	5 9 5	2 4 8	13 15 6	8 10 9	3 9 5
Weighted Average				13 8 0	8 12 6	3 14 11

<sup>2</sup> Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India, 1946, pp. 79-80.

TABLE VI

Average Monthly Earnings in Selected Gardens in the Terai and Darjeeling in 1939 and 1944.

• Garden	1939						1944					
	Men		Women		Children		Men		Women		Children	
	Rs.	as. ps.	Rs.	as. ps.	Rs.	as. ps.	Rs.	as. ps.	Rs.	as. ps.	Rs.	as. ps.
<b>Terai</b>												
A ...	9	2 5	5	7 0	2	11 0	15	4 0	10	9 5	5	4 8
B ...	8	7 4	7	2 11	3	4 0	9	12 4	9	12 10	3	4 0
C ...	8	5 9	7	13 9	3	12 2	18	10 3	14	8 10	7	10 7
D ...	7	1 9	6	13 7	2	0 6	8	2 3	8	7 2	2	5 5
E ...	8	14 1	7	6 1	2	8 4	17	10 1	13	4 5	4	11 6
<b>Darjeeling</b>												
A ...	8	5 1	6	1 0	4	5 0	10	9 5	7	6 1	5	4 4
B ...	8	2 1	6	8 0	3	4 0	9	12 0	8	2 1	4	1 0
C ...	8	9 5	6	9 3	3	5 9	13	6 1	11	8 0	6	8 0
D ...	8	7 0	6	12 0	2	12 10	13	8 0	10	2 1	5	1 0
E ...	6	13 9	5	7 6	3	5 9	8	12 0	6	14 7	3	13 9
Weighted average for the district .....							12	4 8	9	12 10	4	9 1

Close observation of these tables will reveal that the earnings in different localities are widely different and in Assam the earnings of the settled labourers are higher than those of the *faltu* or *basti* labourers.

The Royal Commission states<sup>3</sup> that in 1929-30 the average monthly earnings (obtained by dividing the total monthly earnings by the average daily working strength) in the Assam Valley were Rs. 13-8-7 for men, Rs. 11-1-7 for women and Rs. 7-8-6 for children. In the Surma Valley the corresponding averages were Rs. 10-11-0, Rs. 8-6-1 and Rs. 5-6-2 res-

pectively. The earnings began to decline as a result of the depression in 1930 and the trend was accelerated by the International Tea Control which came into operation in 1933-34. The Control restricted production which resulted in the reduction of work and consequently of earnings of labour. The earnings have shown an upward tendency in recent years, but they have not even now reached the level of 1929-30.

The rates of payment per *hazira* in different tea growing areas in India are given below :

TABLE VII

	Assam Valley	Surma Valley	Dooars	Darjeeling	Wynad	Nilgiris	Coimbatore
	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.
Men ...	0 5 0	0 4 0	0 3 6	0 5 0	0 4 0	0 3 8	0 4 0
	to 0 6 0		to 0 4 0			to 0 4 3	
Women ...	0 4 0	0 3 0	0 3 0	0 4 0	0 2 8	0 2 6	0 2 6
	to 0 2 0				to 0 3 0	to 0 2 8	
Children ...	0 2 0	0 2 0	0 1 6	0 2 6	0 1 4	0 1 0	0 1 6
	to 0 2 6				to 0 2 0	to 0 2 0	

<sup>3</sup> Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India, p. 387.

In the Assam Valley, there are a few gardens where men are paid six annas per *hazira*. But the average coolie of those gardens is more efficient than the coolie elsewhere. Under the old *hazira* system, he can stop work whenever he likes and is paid proportionately. It is said that five annas are paid in the Nilgiris only to such men as do twenty-five per cent more work than men who usually earn four annas. The general rate is reckoned at four annas for a man, two and a half to three annas for a woman and one to two annas for a child. The rate of wages is comparatively lower in the

Dooars than in Assam and the children are paid extremely low. The employment of children in large numbers, in most of the cases as substitutes for women, vitally affects the earnings of both men and women. Children are paid still lower wages in the Nilgiris, where both children and women are the worst sufferers, women's rate being only two and a half annas per *hazira*. The average daily earnings vary considerably from district to district according to the varying rates of wages and the volume of employment. The low average daily cash earnings per day are given below:

TABLE VIII

	Assam Valley <sup>1</sup>	Surma Valley <sup>1</sup>	Dooars	Darjeeling	Wynad	Nilgiris
	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.
Men ...	0 8 2	0 7 5	0 4 8	0 4 0	0 7 0	0 7 0
Women ...	0 6 10	0 5 11	0 2 9	0 3 3	0 5 0	0 5 0
Children ...	0 4 8	0 4 1	0 1 3	0 2 6	0 3 0 to 0 4 0	0 3 0 to 0 4 0

TABLE IX<sup>2</sup>

	South Travancore	Central Travancore, Munar and Annamalais
	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.
Men ...	0 6 0	0 7 0
Women ...	0 5 0	0 5 0
Children ...	0 2 6 to 0 4 6	0 3 6 to 0 4 6

The average daily cash earnings were the highest in the Assam Valley and lowest in the districts of Darjeeling and Dooars and in Madras. In Assam, again, the Lakhimpur district showed the highest average daily cash earnings as will be evident from the table below. Though the basic wages have not been changed on the Assam gardens for several years past, there has been an increase in daily wages due to the Indian Tea Association's policy of making more work available to labour to meet the rise in the cost of living. The average daily cash earnings of settled labour, district-wise, in Assam gardens, in 1939 and 1944, are given below. The table also shows the variation in the average daily cash earnings per day in different districts of Assam.

4 Annual Report on the Working of Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act (XXII of 1932) for 1944.

5 Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India, p. 130.

# WAGES AND CONCESSIONS IN OUR TEA PLANTATIONS

TABLE X<sup>6</sup>

	1939									(Average of March and September)									1944		
• Districts	Men			Women			Children			Men			• Women			Children					
	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.			
Darrang	...	0	5	10	0	4	10	0	3	4	0	7	9	0	6	8	0	4	10		
Goalpara	...	0	6	2	0	4	7	0	2	7	0	9	6	0	6	9	0	4	1		
Kamrup	...	0	5	1	0	4	0	0	2	2	0	7	10	0	5	8	0	4	4		
Lakhimpur	...	0	6	10	0	7	0	0	4	3	0	8	11	0	8	4	0	5	5		
Nowgong	...	0	5	5	0	5	3	0	3	3	0	7	2	0	7	2	0	4	5		
Sebsagar	...	0	4	2	0	3	7	0	2	8	0	7	9	0	6	7	0	5	0		
Cachar	...	0	4	11	0	4	0	0	2	11	0	6	5	0	5	5	0	3	2		
Sylhet	...	0	3	10	0	2	10	0	1	11	0	6	9	0	4	11	0	3	2		

The *ticca* earnings constitute no small part of the total income of the labourers. In the Dooars, they constitute about thirty per cent of the total monthly earnings.

The average monthly *ticca* earnings in some of the Assam tea gardens in 1939 and 1944 are given below :

TABLE XI<sup>7</sup>

Average Monthly *ticca* Earnings in some Assam Tea Gardens in 1939 and 1944.

		1939						1944					
Garden		Men		Women		Children		Men		Women		Children	
		Rs. as. ps.		Rs. as. ps.		Rs. as. ps.		Rs. as. ps.		Rs. as. ps.		Rs. as. ps.	
Assam Valley													
A	...	0	1 6	0	0 6	0	0 3	0	3 11	0	0 9	0	0 2
B	...	2	3 0	1	7 9	1	2 4	3	15 5	2	12 8	2	1 2
C	...	0	5 2	0	10 8	(Not available)		1	15 5	0	13 5	(Not available)	
Surma Valley													
D	...	0	15 1	0	1 6	0	0 5	1	9 11	0	1 7	0	0 5
E	...	0	12 3	0	0 1	0	0 9	1	2 3	0	4 1	0	4 5
F	...	0	11 6	0	6 9	0	2 4	3	12 3	1	9 6	2	6 9
G	...	0	10 9	0	8 7	0	2 6	1	4 6	0	15 9	0	3 1
H	...	1	2 11	0	1 7	0	5 10	2	8 6	0	1 1	0	5 1
I	...	0	8 9	0	5 10	0	3 10	0	14 1	0	10 0	0	2 11
J	...	1	7 0	0	8 0	0	2 4	4	2 10	2	1 5	1	4 8
K	...	0	12 3	0	0 1	0	0 9	1	2 3	0	4 1	0	4 5

<sup>6</sup> Annual Reports on the Working of the Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act (XXII of 1932) for 1939 and 1944

<sup>7</sup> Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India, p. 46.

The *ticca* earnings have gone up in 1944, as compared to 1939, as a result of the policy of making more work available to labour and that is mainly responsible for the rise in the daily cash earnings.

The average daily cash earnings per day or part of the day of the *faltu* or *basti* labourers in the same year were different from the daily earnings of the labourers settled in the garden. In 1943-44, the average monthly cash earnings for settled labourers in the Assam Valley were Rs. 9-10-3 for men, Rs. 7-13-1 for women and Rs. 5-14-10 for children, whereas that of the *faltu* labourers were Rs. 7-4-7 for men, Rs. 6-4-3 for women and Rs. 4-3-3 for children. In the Surma Valley also, during the same year, the average monthly cash earnings for settled labourers were Rs. 7-13-7 for men, Rs. 5-10-6 for women and Rs. 3-12-10 for children whereas that of the *faltu* labourers were Rs. 7-2-4 for men, Rs. 4-5-5 for women, and Rs. 3-3-11 for children. This is mainly due to the fact that the *faltu* labourers cultivate their own lands and work occasionally in the garden according to their convenience. More work by way of *ticca* is also given to the settled labourers than to the *faltu* labourers.

*The average monthly earnings.*—The average monthly earnings of men, women and children settled on the garden in Assam, the Dooars, Darjeeling and the Nilgiris were as in table XII.

It is evident that the general level of wages of the tea garden labourers is exceedingly low.

*Causes of low earnings:* 1. *Concessions to the intermediary.*—In the Dooars and the Nilgiris the monthly earnings of the labourers are the lowest. The *sardars* and

TABLE XII

	Men			Women			Children		
	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.
Assam Valley <sup>a</sup>	9	10	3	7	13	1	5	14	10
Surma Valley <sup>b</sup>	7	13	7	5	10	6	3	12	10
Dooars ...	4	14	0	3	12	6	2	10	0
	to			to			to		
	5	8	0	3	14	0	2	15	0
Darjeeling	6	0	0	4	4	2	2	2	9
	to			to			to		
	6	4	0	4	13	6	3	4	0
Nilgiris ...	5	0	0	3	12	0	1	8	0
	to			to			to		
	5	8	9	4	8	0	2	4	0

*mistries*, in these two localities, earn concessions at the rate of one pice per *hazira* per coolie; the number of *sardars* in the Dooars are increasing every year. Previously there were six to ten *sardars* per thousand coolies. But at present there are fifteen to twenty *sardars* per thousand coolies. This, coupled with unauthorised deductions from coolies' pay, is responsible to a large extent for the low level of their monthly earnings. The replacement of men and women by child labour also accounts for their low monthly earnings.

2. *Absenteeism.*—The degree of absenteeism that prevails in areas and among different races of coolies is also responsible for the general low level of the

<sup>8</sup> Annual Report on the Working of the Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act, (XXII of 1932) for the year ending 30th September 1944, p. 26.

<sup>9</sup> Loc. cit. •

average monthly earnings. The coolies are by nature sluggish and improvident and often remain content with an income allowing only the bare amenities of life. The day following the market day shows the lowest level of attendance ; hardly fifty per cent of the coolies turn out to work. They drink profusely on the market day and idle away their time.

In 1900, the Deputy Commissioner estimated that coolies in the Dooars did not, on the average, work for more than eighteen to twenty days in the month.

It is said that men work well for four hours, but that, if attempts are made to exact much heavier tasks, dissatisfaction results, and the coolies may strike or proceed to other estates where the tasks are easier. A great difficulty is to be faced in turning out the coolies to work. The average at work varies from fifty to seventy per cent of the total labour force. As such, a much larger resident force is required than what obtains on most Assam gardens. The following table shows the percentage of absenteeism for the last six years:

TABLE XIII<sup>10</sup>

Absenteeism among Settled Labourers in Assam Gardens, 1933-44.

Year	Total number of labourers on books (average of two months, March and September)	Average daily working strength	Percentage of attendance	Percentage of absenteeism
1938—39	565,427	422,726	74.80	25.20
1939—40	570,354	436,771	76.60	23.40
1940—41	539,031	412,804	76.60	23.40
1941—42	588,163	424,296	72.10	27.90
1942—43	560,525	430,094	76.70	23.30
1943—44	542,099	404,050	75.50	24.50

The above table shows the extent of absenteeism. During 1941-42, it reached the highest level, being 27.90 per cent. There have not been any appreciable change, however, in the percentage of absenteeism

during 1938 to 1944. The rate of absenteeism is higher in Bengal and comparatively lower in Southern India. The following table gives the percentage of absenteeism in those areas for the period 1943-44:

10 As compiled in the Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India (p. 38) from the Reports of the Working of the Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act (XXII of 1932) for respective years.



TABLE XIV<sup>11</sup>

Areas	Percentage of absenteeism on the average
Dooars (101 gardens).	31.80
Terai (20 gardens) ...	27.70
Darjeeling (33 gardens)	27.60
South India (49 gardens) ...	17.50

The problem of absenteeism is a complex one. Its importance is recognised not only for its effects on production but also as a reflection of the workers' morale and discipline. Such a high percentage of

absenteeism is a direct result of a number of factors, both personal and organisational, including industrial health, longer hours, domestic obligations and lower standard of living enforced by low earnings. Sickness due to minor epidemics perpetuate throughout the year in the tea plantations. The workers suffering from malnutrition, and living in insanitary conditions, are most susceptible to attacks of influenza, colds, hook-worm, malaria, dysentery and other common forms of sickness. Moreover, the workers are most uncharitably disposed to avail medical aids and would more readily like to stay away from work.

The rate of absenteeism is the highest among women. The following table provides a comparison of the rates of absenteeism between men, women and children.

TABLE XV<sup>12</sup>

Months	Men	Women	Children
January ...	37.02	33.56	63.42
February ...	37.29	26.24	59.66
March ...	35.15	26.10	60.99
April ...	31.33	28.21	63.04
May ...	29.36	35.55	64.23
June ...	31.11	35.06	60.48
July ...	32.24	37.62	70.18
August ...	33.61	40.03	69.59
September ...	32.53	39.66	69.58
October ...	28.92	35.21	66.21
November ...	31.27	32.98	61.50
December ...	31.29	40.62	62.48

Though women had been more frequently absent than men, they generally had more justification. Mass employment of women, especially of married women, is also responsible for the high percentage of absenteeism; and, unless the dual responsibilities of women are recognised and catered for, they will.

11 *Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India*, 1946, pp. 78, 79 and 118.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 78.

always take time for household duties and remain constantly worried and harassed by the impossibility of keeping up both home and the job.

During recent years, there has been a fall in the degree of absenteeism and a dearth of labour is felt in every garden. In the Assam tea gardens, the daily average labour strength, as compared with the total number of labourers in the books for 1935-36, shows that absenteeism was 23.00 per cent in the case of men, 29.00 per cent in the case of women and 30.00 per cent in the case of children, or 26.60 per cent in the case of all labourers combined.<sup>13</sup> Five years later, in 1940-41, the figure for absenteeism came down to 21.00 per cent for men, 27.00 per cent for women and 26.60 per cent for children. During 1941-42 and 1943-44, it has gone down still further to 23.30 per cent and 24.50 per cent on the average, respectively. To cope with the increased rate of war production, most of the labourers are compelled to turn out regularly and are universally required to work overtime for a considerable length of time. Planters have devised various means to encourage workers to turn up regularly for work, such as granting a good attendance bonus of eight annas per week for six days' attendance. Indirect punitive measures are also used to prevent absenteeism such as holding back a part of the rice ration, etc.<sup>14</sup>

The Indian Tea Association contented that the average of the best and worst months—September and March—cannot show accurately the average percentage for the whole year. But, in this respect, the observations of the Royal Commission on Labour seem to be sufficiently convincing.

They state that "the constancy of the published figures for September and March makes it unlikely that there have been substantial changes in the percentages attending at other seasons. In considering the extent of absenteeism in the Assam tea gardens, it is important to bear in mind the subsidiary occupation of the garden worker. The most important is private cultivation, but household duties in agricultural surroundings such as the purchases of weekly supplies from the market, the collection of firewood, the grazing of cattle, the threshing of corn, etc., make a considerable demand on the workers' time and particularly on that of the women. Absenteeism is, therefore, "to some extent inevitable"<sup>15</sup>

*Inaccuracy of the figures of the average monthly cash earnings of workers in Assam.*

—The figures of the average monthly cash earnings in the tea gardens of Assam are supplied by the Government of Assam in its annual report on immigrant labour. In order to obtain the average monthly cash earnings, the figures, for the total wages paid, are divided by the figures, for the average daily working strength in the months of March and September, representing respectively the slack and the busy seasons of the year. But the average of the earnings of these two months cannot be said to represent the average monthly cash earnings because earnings during the rest of the months in the respective seasons stand much below these levels. For the monthly average earnings, the average of twelve months should be taken into consideration.

*Need of separate wage statistics for labourers without private lands to cultivate.—*

13 Worked out from the Reports of the Working of the Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act (XXII of 1932) for respective years.

14 Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India, p. 118.

15 Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India, p. 383.

For any calculation of cash earnings of the workers, a distinction must be made between the workers holding land, and those without land. The labourer who has no private land to cultivate is more intent on cash earnings and works both with greater intensity and for longer hours. The worker who possesses land for cultivation is not so particular about the cash earnings and for about three to four months his cash earnings are only nominal. During these months he cultivates his land. The following table shows the difference in cash earnings between these two classes of labourers during the months of paddy cultivation and harvest. In December and July they harvest *Jali* and *Aush* paddy respectively.

TABLE XVI

		A worker with land		A worker without land	
		Cash earnings	Absence	Cash earnings	Absence
		Rs. as. ps.	days	Rs. as. ps.	days
December 1941					
1st week	...	0 12 0	3	1 4 0	1
2nd week	...	1 0 0	2	1 8 0	1
3rd week	...	0 13 0	3	1 8 0	1
4th week	...	1 8 0	1	1 4 0	1
		4 1 0	9	5 8 0	4
July 1941					
1st week	...	1 3 0		1 14 0	
2nd week	...	1 0 0	2	1 9 0	1
3rd week	...	0 10 0	4	1 14 0	
4th week	...		6	1 9 0	1
		2 13 0	12	6 14 0	2

The attendance of the labourer without paddy land was more regular than that of the labourer possessing paddy land. Even though the former also absented from work his earnings are not proportionately low as he repaired the loss by working hard on other days of the week. The latter, however, does not exhibit any

such eagerness to compensate for the loss and his earnings are less. Between their earnings there was a difference of twenty-five per cent. In order, therefore, to get a fair idea of cash earnings of the labourers, we must have two different sets of figures showing respectively the earnings of these two different classes of workers.

*Variation in earnings between men and women in different seasons.*—Another feature of cash earnings on tea plantations is that the earnings of women exceed the earnings of men in the plucking season, whereas a man earns more than a woman in the non-plucking season.<sup>16</sup> Taking twenty to thirty seers to be the average plucking rate of a woman per day, she earns nine rupees and twelve annas per month. Thus she often earns more than an average man whose earnings generally amount to about eight rupees per month in the plucking season. But the gulf between the earnings of women in the two seasons is wider than that of men.

TABLE XVII<sup>17</sup>

		September 1941			March 1942		
		Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.
Men	...	7	12	4	10	1	4½
Women	...	9	0	8	5	5	2
Children	...	4	4	3	3	9	7

In the month of September, 1941, men earned Rs. 7-12-4, while women and children earned Rs. 9-0-8 and Rs. 4-4-3 respectively. The difference between the earnings of men and women was more marked in March 1942, when men earned Rs. 10-1-4½, whereas women

earned Rs. 5-5-2, almost half of the earnings of men. The earnings of children also fell to Rs. 3-9-7.

From 1905 to 1929, the general tendency, of the wage movement in Assam gardens, was to rise. Increasing demand for labour, due to the expansion of the trade and the rising level of prices, were the two main contributing factors in the movement of wages. The following table gives the wage figures for some of the selected years.

TABLE XVIII

Years		Men	Women	Child- ren
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1905-06	...	7.11	5.54	3.48
1920-21	...	8.97	7.46	4.67
1921-22	...	9.33	8.40	4.68
1928-29	...	12.45	9.97	6.43

From Rs. 7.11 in 1905-06, the earnings of men increased to Rs. 12.45 in 1928-29. During the same period, the earnings of women increased from Rs. 5.54 to Rs. 9.97 and that of children from Rs. 3.48 to Rs. 6.43.

Since 1931, the wage level in Assam gardens showed a downward tendency and reached the lowest mark in 1936. Since then it has been recovering as the industry is passing through a boom period. The following table shows the level of wages in different years :

16 In the early stages of the industry differential wage scales for men, women and children were fixed by contract ; the wages of women and children were respectively twenty per cent and forty per cent lower than those of men. But the actual earnings of women and children were often much less than the legally fixed rates. In 1900, for instance, the wages of women were twenty-five to thirty per cent lower than those of men (*Assam Labour Report, 1902-3*, p. 8). The wages of children, of course, varied according to the age, ranging, for instance, from fifteen to four rupees in 1901 (*Assam Labour Report, 1901*, p. 7).

17 *Annual Report on the Working of the Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act (XXII of 1932) for respective years.*

TABLE XIX<sup>18</sup>

Average Monthly Cash Earnings on Assam Tea Gardens (Settled Labour).

Year	Assam Valley									Surma Valley								
	Men			Women			Children			Men			Women			Children		
	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.
1923-24	11	5	1	9	8	9	5	4	9	8	12	10	6	15	5	4	11	4
1928-29	14	1	5	11	4	2	7	6	1	10	13	11	8	11	2	5	7	11
1930-31	14	0	1	10	12	7	7	4	7	9	3	2	7	10	5	5	3	6
1931-32	12	8	5	9	8	7	6	15	8	7	14	11	6	1	1	4	9	1
1932-33	11	12	8	8	15	8	6	6	9	7	6	9	5	4	10	4	2	7
1933-34	7	7	7	5	14	4	4	3	8	5	6	3	3	11	10	2	10	2
1934-35	7	2	11	5	7	3	3	5	3	5	10	9	3	12	4	2	11	5
1935-36	6	13	2	5	10	4	4	0	2	5	12	11	4	0	1	2	13	7
1936-37	7	3	5	5	13	7	4	4	7	5	10	11	4	1	10	2	12	9
1937-38	7	1	9	5	13	4	4	3	4	6	2	5	4	4	1	2	15	2
1938-39	7	15	3	6	7	5	4	9	2	6	5	6	4	5	6	3	2	2
1939-40	7	14	1	6	3	8	4	7	9	6	4	7	4	7	3	3	1	8
1940-41	8	2	1	6	8	4	4	0	4	5	8	10	4	12	4	3	3	3
1941-42	8	11	5	7	2	10	5	4	0	6	15	0	5	7	1	2	11	2
1942-43	8	10	4	6	15	4	5	4	2	7	4	3	5	7	2	3	8	6
1943-44	9	10	3	7	13	1	5	14	10	7	13	7	5	10	6	3	12	10

The average monthly earnings of the workers fell gradually during the years 1929 to 1936, due to the slump in the trade and the subsequent adoption of the restriction scheme. In the Assam Valley, in 1929, men earned on an average Rs. 14-1-5 per month while their earnings in 1936 fell to Rs. 6-13-2. In 1929, women and children earned Rs. 11-4-2 and Rs. 7-6-1 per month respectively, but their earnings in 1936 fell to Rs. 5-10-4 and Rs. 4-0-2 respectively. Similar was the fall in the Surma Valley.

It is evident, therefore, that during the seven years between 1929-36, the average monthly earnings of the workers fell by more than fifty per cent.

The policy of crop restriction, since 1933, led to the improvement of the condition of the industry. This resulted in better prices and higher dividends, but this improvement did not reflect itself in the rise of the wage level as would be evident from the table below :

18 Compiled from : (a) Reports on Immigrant Labour in the Province of Assam.

(b) Annual Reports on the Working of the Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act (XXII of 1932) for respective years.

TABLE XX

Year	Price per pound of exports (average by sea)	Wages of men (average of two valleys)	Production in million pounds
	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	
1928-29 ... ..	0 11 10	12 7 8	246
1932-33 ... ..	0 7 3	9 9 8	257
1936-37 ... ..	0 10 8	6 7 2	223
Percentage fall ( - ) or rise ( + ) in 1932-33 over 1928-29 ... ..	31.60	23.00	+ 4.50
in 1936-37 over 1932-33 ... ..	32.03	33.00	13.00

In the above table, a comparison of prices, wages and production shows that during 1928-29, the year just before depression, and 1932-33, the worst year of depression, and export control and crop restriction (according to the International Tea Control Scheme), the prices of tea fell by 31.60 per cent but the wages fell only by 23.00 per cent as production was not restricted. During 1932-33 and 1936-37, the year showing the result of restriction, the general slump was over and the prices rose by 32.60 per cent, but wages fell by 33.00 per cent. The very steps that were calculated to improve the position of the industry had involved reduction of wages for the labourer.

During 1941-42, the price per pound of tea was Re. 1-13-0; the wage of men was Rs. 8-3-3 and the productions were three hundred and fifty-one million pounds. Due to the increased demand the prices have risen by 141.70 per cent, but the rise in wages is not at all substantial, being only 27.00 per cent. The wage level was more or less the same during 1942-43, and in 1943-44 it did not show much improvement. The rise in cash earnings during this period was only about 14.00 per cent on the average.

During 1934-44, wages were higher in the tea districts of Central Travancore, Munnar, the Annamallais, the Nilgiris and the Wynad.

TABLE XXI<sup>19</sup>

Rates (in annas) of Daily Wages in Plantations—1934 and 1944.

Year	South Travancore			Central Travancore			Munnar			Annamallais	
	Men	Women	Children	Men	Women	Children	Men	Women	Children	Men	Women
1934 ... ..	5—6	4	2—3½	6	4	3	6—7	4	2½—3½	6	4
1944 ... ..	6—7	5	2½—4½	7—8	5	4	7—8	5	3½—4½	7	5

<sup>19</sup> Collected from the Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India, 1946, p. 131.

In 1944, men received per day six to seven annas, women received five annas and children received two and a half to four and a half annas in South Travancore, and they respectively received seven to eight annas, five annas and four annas in Central Travancore. In 1939, the tea estates in the Annamallais raised their tasks when they raised the rates of wages by one anna. It was found that the cost per acre on certain items of plantation work did not increase as a result of increase in wage rates; in some of the cases it even decreased. In addition to the increase in wages, concession rates for grains and dearness allowances were granted to the labourers. If, in spite of these added costs, the cost per acre remained the same, it only proves that the tasks have been increased.

Any crisis that the industry faces directly affects the income of the labourers. They bear the brunt of the crisis. The planters shift very successfully to the labourers almost the whole of the incidence of the crisis. Depression leads to curtailment of output and diminution in expenditure. As other factors of production cannot so easily or readily be removed, and as labour is the prime motive force, the fall in the output is generally affected by reducing the employment of the labourers for production. On tea plantations, mobility of labour is almost unthinkable and work in the garden is the only means of livelihood for the labourers. Any reduction in the output means unemployment, under-employment and reductions in the wage rates. As the labourers in plantation areas are not at all organised, and their collective bargaining power is almost nil, they cannot but submit to the misfortune.

*Response of wages to the rise or fall in the price level.*—Wages in tea estates do not respond to the movement of prices. They

have always lagged behind any upward trend in prices. This was conclusively proved by the Enquiry Committee of 1921-22 appointed by the Government to enquire into the wage rates in tea plantations. The Committee found that the rise in wages did not keep pace with the rise in the cost of living and that, consequently, the labourers' standard of living was lowered. In 1922, while there was a rise of 39.95 per cent in the cost of living index, there was only a rise of 19.20 per cent in the earnings of the family (the average had been taken for the whole province). After the depression of 1929-36, the wage level began to recover since 1937. Though, by 1942, it had considerably improved, yet, the present position is far from satisfactory.

Much has been made of the rise of a few annas in wages of the labourers between 1940-44. But, when it is remembered that the cost of living has risen from one hundred to two hundred per cent during that period in most parts of the country, and the wages paid in other industries have increased two to three times, this little rise appears totally disproportionate and negligible. The planters are, however, meeting the situation through various devices. In some gardens, they are compelled to raise the rates of wages while, in others, food stuff is distributed at a cheaper rate. In some other gardens, areas under tea plantations are being converted into paddy lands.

*Measures adopted to offset the rise in prices of consumption goods.*—The Indian Tea Association has advised all its members not to affect any rise in the wage rates as far as it is possible. It has expressed its preference that instead of giving additional dearness allowance to offset the rise in prices of food-stuffs, it would instead prefer issue of rice at concession rates. The Indian Tea Association has also

suggested that better scope of work should be provided so as to enable the workers to earn more and that "subsistence allowance" should be made at so many pies per *hazira*.<sup>20</sup>

Important foodstuffs are supplied by the district branches of the Indian Tea Association to each of the members

who in turn sell them at concession rates to the workers.

Subject to the limitations of availability of supplies, foodstuffs are at present issued to labourers and their dependents on the scales and at the rates set forth below<sup>21</sup>:

TABLE XXII

Assam Valley

	Adults	Children	Rate (maximum) Rs. as. pa.
Rice ...	4 seers weekly	40%	5 0 0 per maund
Dal ...	3½ „ monthly		0 4 0 „ seer
Mustard oil ...	1½ „ „		0 8 0 „ „
Salt ...	½ „ „		0 3 0 „ „
Gur ...	2 „ „		0 3 0 „ „

TABLE XXIII

Surma Valley

	Men	Women	Children	Rate Rs. as. ps.
Rice ...	5 seers	4 seers	3 seers	0 2 0 per seer
Dal ...	12 chataks	10 chataks	7 chataks	0 3 0 „ „
Mustard oil ...	4 „	3 „	2 „	0 8 0 „ „
Salt ...	4 „	3 „	2 „	0 1 6 „ „
Gur ...	4 „	3 „	2 „	0 3 9 „ „

<sup>20</sup> Individual gardens would be at liberty at any time to meet an increase in the cost of living by making more work available or by issuing rice at concession rates, but that "subsistence allowance" in cash would not be given until the General Committee had been consulted and had agreed that such a form of compensation was necessary.

<sup>21</sup> Report on an Enquiry into Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India, pp. 49, 82.



TABLE XXIV

Dooars

	Adults	Children	Rate
Rice	4 seers	3 seers	Rs. 5/- per maund
Food grains other than rice	1 "		} Half cost price
Dal	1 "		
Mustard oil	1 "		
Salt	1 "		
Gur	1 "		

TABLE XXV

Terai

	Adults	Children	Rate
Rice	5 seers		Rs. 5/- per maund
Dal	1 "		} Half these quantities Rates at the discretion of the manager
Mustard oil	1 "		
Salt	1 "		
Gur	1 "		

TABLE XXVI

Darjeeling

	Men	Women	Children	Rate
Rice	6 seers	4 seers	3 seers	Rs. 8/- per maund

The scale of rations for food-stuffs other than rice has been left to the discretion of the managers who would, in drawing up a scale of rations, take into consideration the number of members in the family including dependents.

In actual practice, there is a good lot

of diversity owing to different local conditions. The garden authorities often charge a higher price than that prescribed by the Indian Tea Association. During our investigation in January, 1942, we noted the following prices of the commodities prevalent in Assam :

TABLE XXVII

Commodities	Price charged by the garden authority	Quantity	Market price			Pre-war price		
			Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.
Rice	6 8 0	1 maund	10	0	0	4	8	0
Mustard oil	0 8 0	1 seer	0	13	0	0	6	0
Musur dal	0 5 0	1 „	0	8	0	0	2	0
Sugar or gur	0 4 0	1 „	0	6	0	0	2	0

Most of the managers have failed to make adequate arrangements for successful rationing. The ration was not always given to the labourers because of the lack of sufficient stock. Mustard oil and salt were also often not available and the ration was reduced and cut off for absence from work.

“Dearness allowance is given to labourers in Bengal plantations at the rate of one anna per *hazira* to adults and six pies to children in April, 1944. Prior to that, half of the allowance of eight pies per day worked for adults, and four pies for children, was started on 1st October, 1942, and in 1943 most of the estates increased it to one anna and six pies for adults and children respectively, although some estates, especially in the Nilgiris and Wynad, still pay only eight pies and four pies. In Mysore and the Shevaroy, the

dearness allowance is only six pies and three pies.”<sup>22</sup>

The policy adopted in 1942 included the grant of a cash allowance equivalent to an annual payment of ten rupees per man, eight rupees per woman, and four rupees per child. It was primarily intended to meet the increase in the cost of cloth and the Committee, therefore, recommended that the payment of this cash allowance be continued. The labourers are given this allowance at the *Holi* and *Puja* ceremonies. Cloth and umbrellas are sold at concession rates. A piece of cloth, measuring nine yards by forty inches, is sold at one rupee and fourteen annas. In the market, the same is sold at three rupees.

The compensation for the increased cost of living given to the plantation workers was inadequate. “In Assam, there has been

an increase of two annas and four pies in the rupee in actual cash earnings of the labour force between 1939 and 1943. The value of food-stuffs and cloth concessions in 1943, according to the Indian Tea Association, is roughly ten annas and nine pies for every rupee of the total wages. If to this is added two annas and four pies in the rupee increase in cash earning, it

will be seen that the labourer received in 1943 cash or commodities at concession rates to the extent of thirteen annas and one pie for every rupee of his wages in 1939. There is no official cost of living for Assam. The following table, however, gives us fairly accurate information regarding the rise in the cost of essential food-stuff."

TABLE XXVIII<sup>23</sup>

Article	Rate per	Prices obtaining in 1939	Prices obtaining in 1943	Prices in Gauhati in May 1945	Percentage of Col. 5 to 3	Prices in Silchar in May 1945	Percentage of Col. 7 to 3	Prices in Tinsukia in May 1945	Percentage of Col. 9 to 3
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.		Rs. as. ps.		Rs. as. ps.	
1. Rice	Maund	4 0 0	30 0 0	11 14 0	331	14 12 0	328	16 0 0	356
		to	to						
		5 0 0	40 0 0						
2. Dal	Seer	0 2 0	0 12 0	0 0 2	361	0 11 2	447	0 8 4	333
		to	to						
		0 3 0	0 14 0						
3. Fish	"	0 4 0	1 8 0	1 4 0	333	1 0 0	267	2 7 0	650
		to	to						
		0 8 0	2 0 0						
4. Eggs	Four	0 1 6	0 10 0						
			to						
			0 12 0						
5. Chicken	Each	0 4 0	1 4 0						
		to	to						
		0 6 0	1 12 0						
6. Goat	"	2 0 0	0 10 0						
		to	to						
		3 0 0	0 12 0						
7. Vegetables <sup>24</sup>	Seer	0 2 0	0 8 0	0 6 0	300	0 6 5		0 10 9	538
			to						
			0 10 0						
8. Mustard oil	"	0 6 0	1 12 0	1 10 0	371	1 14 0	429	1 10 0	371
		to	to						
		0 8 0	2 0 0						

We, therefore, find that, in the wage level, there has been an increase of about eighty per cent only whereas, in the cost of living, there has been a rise well above three hundred per cent.

"For the Dooars, the total value of

the concessions is roughly nine annas and nine pies for every rupee of the total wages. If we add the increased cash earnings of six annas and six pies to this amount, it will be seen that the labourer has received cash or commodities at concession rates

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>24</sup> Average of prices of potatoes and onions.

to the extent of one rupee and three pies for every rupee of his former wage. This shows that the wage level rose by about hundred per cent, but percentage increase in prices of foodstuffs, etc., since 1939, in the Dooars was more than three hundred per cent. The over-all increase in the Terai and Darjeeling was about the same as in the Dooars. The prevailing prices were about

three hundred per cent higher than the pre-war prices, whereas the wages rose by one hundred per cent only.<sup>25</sup>

In South India, the total allowance to compensate the rise in prices amounts to three annas. The aggregate wages in 1943 as compared to 1939 in the four districts are shown below<sup>26</sup> :

TABLE XXIX  
Aggregate Wages in 1939 and 1943

District	Men			Women		
	1939	1943	Percentage increase	1939	1943	Percentage increase
	Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.		Rs. as. ps.	Rs. as. ps.	
Annamallais ...	0 7 0	0 10 0	43.00	0 5 0	0 8 0	60.00
Nilgiris ...	0 6 0	0 9 0	50.00	0 4 0	0 7 0	75.00
Wynad ...	0 6 0	0 9 0	50.00	0 4 0	0 7 0	75.00
Malabar	0 4 0	0 8 0	100.00	0 3 0	0 7 0	133.00

The rise in the cost of living in Madras and two important centres in the planting areas is shown in the following table :

TABLE XXX  
Cost of Living Index 1939-45 (June 1936 = 100)

Month and Year		Madras	Coimbatore	Calicut
September	1939 ...	103	102	103
January	1940 ...	107		
"	1941 ...	108	107	110
"	1942 ...	117	118	129
"	1943 ...	161	178	183
"	1944 ...	193	213	227
"	1945 ...	213	220	240

<sup>25</sup> Report on an Enquiry into the Conditions of Labour in Plantations in India, p. 85.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

We, therefore, find that there was a general rise of about fifty per cent in the wage level which was inadequate to cover a rise of about two hundred and thirteen to two hundred and forty per cent in the cost of living index.

Moreover, "the grant of concessions was not only inadequate, but they were very late to come. The grain concession, in most of the cases, was started only towards the end of 1941, and the dear provision allowance only in October, 1942. Meanwhile, prices of commodities and food-stuff were steadily mounting and the workers had a very bad time upto 1943."

In a large number of gardens, rations are only issued to workers, and no consideration is made for dependents who have to be maintained from the wages earned by the workers plus any income which might be derived from cultivation or other sources. Moreover, excepting the ration for a man, the ration for a woman and for a growing child is quite inadequate. It is clear that

the entire coolie population, including dependents, cannot live on the rations supplied but have to supplement them from other resources.

The labourers are facing unimaginable hardships. Increment in the rates of consumption goods is hardly covered by the present method of granting dearness allowance and the possibilities of meeting the situation by working overtime have been exhausted. Relief can be effected only through a proportionate rise in the wage rates. In this respect, the policy adopted to counterbalance the war time abnormal rise in the consumption goods seems to be wiser than the policy of the Indian Tea Association. In Ceylon, towards the end of 1940, it was decided that the statutory rates of minimum wages should be increased, to allow for the increased cost of living due to the general rise in commodity prices following the outbreak of war. The revised rates came into force with effect from February, 1941, and were as follows :

TABLE XXXI

	Men Cts.	Women Cts.	Children Cts.
Up country ... ..	54	43	32
Mid country ... ..	52	41	31
Low country ... ..	50	41	30

With the introduction of the revised rates of wages, however, the war bonus, which was being paid on a voluntary basis by estates generally, was discontinued and estates, which had been issuing rice to labourers at a cheaper rate, increased it to the permissible maximum limit.<sup>27</sup>

*Period of payment.*—About ten years back, in Assam, wages were paid monthly, irrespective of the *hazira*; but the *ticca* or overtime wages were paid daily in some gardens and weekly or fortnightly in others. In Bengal, the wages were paid monthly in some cases, and weekly and fortnightly in others,

<sup>27</sup> Annual Report on the Plantation Labourers in Ceylon, 1941, p. 10.

while in Madras the payment was weekly.<sup>28</sup> During the last ten years, weekly payment has become the general rule. In Assam, Madras and the Dooars, the *hazira* and the *ticca* are paid weekly, but in many of the gardens the *ticca* is paid daily. In many gardens in Assam, the labourers are paid both the *hazira* and the *ticca* on weekly basis. In a few cases they are paid fortnightly.

*Middlemen acting as supervisors and their commission.*—They are employed under the *sardar* who is also the supervisor in Assam and receives a monthly pay of ten to thirteen rupees. The *sardar* gets commission on the *ticca* earnings of the coolies and on the earnings accruing from work on holidays. In many gardens, he is paid one anna commission per rupee on the *hazira* earnings of the coolies under him. All the labourers in Assam are paid direct. In the Dooars and Darjeeling, a different method for labour control is practised. There, the *dafadars* supervise over the coolies. In South Indian gardens, it is the practice to muster the coolies in the morning from the check roll to see that they are present. They are then distributed and an entry is made in a distribution book. A *mistry* goes out with each gang to the particular work on which they may be employed. As a rule, the field superintendent is employed to go round and visit the different gangs at work. His duty is to check the *mistry* who subsequently brings up a list of the coolies who have not done the task. If the work is neglected, the *mistry* is held responsible and loses his pay or commission. If the coolie is given "half a day's name" it indirectly affects the *mistry*. It is, therefore, in his interest to see that the coolie completes his task well. A *mistry* may receive four annas a day, in addition to the commission, whenever his gang at work amounts to twenty-five coolies, or eight annas on each coolie

who works a full month excluding Sundays or bazaar days. A similar process is adopted in Darjeeling where the Superintendent is called *bahidar* and his subordinate *dafadar*. The *sardars* in the Dooars receive one pice per *hazira* for each coolie. If a coolie completes four *haziras* in a day, the *sardar* will get four pice for that particular coolie. The *sardar* often earns more than ten rupees per week. The payment is made weekly and direct to the earner.

*Methods of payment.*—In a large number of gardens in the Dooars, the *ticca* alone is paid direct and daily, and the *hazira* is paid to the *sardar* who, before paying up the coolies, makes his own deductions for the amount advanced to different coolies under him. The introduction of the Payment of Wages Act (1936), has not been effective in demolishing the truck-system, delays in wage payment and unauthorised fines and deductions. The improper exaction of money by the *sardars* is a serious evil in the Dooars. The elasticity of the piece rate of the wages in the garden, coupled with the preponderance of the aboriginal labour, had made the whole system liable to both fraud and overtime work without proper and adequate remuneration.

*Concessions.*—Cash earnings of the worker do not represent his total remuneration and an important element in the attractions of a garden is frequently the value of "concessions," offered in addition to the cash wages. Free housing accommodation, medical attendance, cheap rice and clothing, garden land for private cultivation, free fuel, advances of rice and money, and bonus are the main forms of concessions granted.

*The total value of indirect remunerations.*—The value of the indirect remunerations cannot be ascertained with accuracy. We attempt a rough estimation below :

<sup>28</sup> Bulletin of Indian Industries and Labour, No. 34, Calcutta, 1926, p. 28.

TABLE XXXII

	Rs.	as.	ps.
Housing ( <i>Kacha</i> , one room tenement) ..	10	0	0
Fuel ...	24	0	0
Clothing (whole family) ...	20	0	0
Medical charges (whole family) ..	6	0	0
Interest on advances ...	0	4	0
Bonus (when given) ..	8	0	0
Paddy land and free grazing field ...	2	0	0
Sale of vegetables, milk, eggs, etc. ...	5	0	0
Rice at concession rates ...	8	0	0
Total. .	83	4	0

Free housing, free fuel, gift of clothes and medical facilities are universally enjoyed, the money value of which does not exceed thirty-three rupees and five annas per head per annum. The extra remuneration to a labourer, in addition to his money wages, therefore, amounts to two rupees and twelve annas per month. Only about forty per cent of the total labour force can be said to earn an additional sum of ten annas per mensem per head from cultivation of land, sale of milk and vegetables, etc. The concession, in the proper sense of the term, can, therefore, be estimated at two rupees and twelve annas per month in the case of forty per cent of the labour force; in the case of the remaining sixty per cent, it is only worth two rupees and two annas.

Moreover, the claim for considering two rupees and two annas as extra remuneration for the work in the estates deserves no consideration in view of the fact that, in other industrial centres too, the worker's family derives a subsidiary income from such varied sources as landed

property, firewood brought from jungles, cow dung cakes, selling of milk, fish, vegetables, etc., besides jobs, tips, etc. In Ahmedabad, the average income from subsidiary source was three rupees, five annas and two pies out of a total budget of forty-four rupees, seven annas and two pies, i.e., 7.40 per cent of the total.

The grant of such concessions has made the whole of the wage system in tea plantations irregular, hazardous and arbitrary. The coolies are remunerated most inequitably. In the matter of distribution of the land, no uniform principle is followed. The coolies, who have no land to cultivate, are allowed no other opportunity of supplementing their income. An enquiry will reveal that more than fifty per cent of the labourers do not possess any land; on the other hand, many of those possessing land sublet them. The rates of wages for landless labourers are not fixed at a higher level. There is no certainty as to how a coolie will be allowed to enjoy the land under him. The task of re-distributing the land is taken up without any previous notice, rendering the improvement of land unremunerative; thus all incentive towards improvement is killed. The absence of any clear and fixed policy of distributing the land allows room for favouritism, on the one hand, and victimization, on the other. Similarly, housing accommodation and the distribution of clothes and rice at concession rates lend themselves to partial and fraudulent treatment. With unscrupulous clerks and accountants working in collusion with the *sardars*, the possibilities of deception, false accounting and injustice increase. There is, necessarily, a limit put on the quantity of concession rice which a coolie is allowed to buy; and there are reasons to believe that the ration is not sufficient in a fairly large number of cases. The 'truck-system,' necessarily, involves curtailment of

liberties in spending one's own earnings as also restrictions in his private and social life. These generate discontent among the labourers.

Absence of standardisation of occupations and jobs, and the adoption of different basis of wage fixation in different gardens, have rendered the whole system of wage payment in tea plantations arbitrary and chaotic. The total absence of any organisation of labour has made any bargaining for higher wages by labourers impossible. The wage rates are extremely low and are accompanied with an irregular and hazardous truck-system. Striking variations of wage rates and earnings are discernible not only from garden to garden, but also in the same garden at one and the same time. The extreme rigidity in the matter of wages, as the result of "wage agreements" among ninety per cent of the employers, prevent (after the abolition of indentured system) the free movement of workers from one garden to another, where wages and conditions of employment may be more attractive.

The irresponsive nature that the wage rates exhibited during 1921-22, and the present period of high prices, threatens the whole industry with serious and wide-spread labour troubles. Though we mark a rise in earnings since 1939, wages have lagged a long way behind the cost of living. Even when we allow for the fact that rice was supplied at the concession rate of five rupees per maund and certain cloth allowance were made, the wages paid to a labourer in these gardens are far from being adequate to give him and his family the necessary amount of food and clothing. The injustice of the case appears to be all the more glaring when we contrast the small increment in the wages of tea garden labour

with the increment of one hundred to two hundred per cent of the price of tea during the latter half of 1942 and the early part of 1943. It becomes more conspicuous when we think that the labourers are fettered with their three year contracts and have been made to work under the Defence of India Rules in an area rendered insecure by enemy bombing, just for a small rise in wages.<sup>29</sup>

Tea industry is a sheltered industry in every sense of the term. It is almost a monopoly, yet, the prevailing wage rates are very low. This not only harms the labourers, but also jeopardises the planters' interest. Wages are the main factors influencing migration. More than anything else, the prospect of high cash earnings appeals most to the recruits. Low wages, therefore, hinder the smooth supply of labour. Moreover, with increasing competition from other industries, it becomes incumbent upon the planters that they should increase the wage rates. The allegations that the workers, in the case of an increase in wages, will remain idle or that they will spend extra earnings on drink, are untenable. There is ample evidence to show that the workers most readily avail themselves of any opportunity of higher earnings in order to raise their standard of living.

A tendency to employ cheap child labour, at the cost of the adult, is evident throughout the tea districts. A decline in the family earnings and worsening of the conditions of living is the inevitable result. The wage system that requires that the whole family of man, woman and child must toil to eke out a margin of subsistence and depend on cultivation for supplementing their meagre income can hardly be justified from the point of view of social welfare and the interest of the industry itself.

<sup>29</sup> Ten per cent of the total strength in each of the gardens in Assam had been employed in various war projects. The figures of persons employed up to the 31st October, 1942 were : (a) Labourers at work, 82,762 and (b) European personnel, 225.



# WAGES UNDER A TRANSITIONAL ECONOMY

A. G. NAGARAJ

The industrial unrest, which is gathering momentum all over the country, is mainly due, says the author, to the lag between prices and wages. The increased cash wages is "more or less frittered away in socially undesirable channels." Educative and legislative measures alone can tackle the problem effectively. The author suggests some alternatives to high cash wages which, he believes, will substantially help both the wage earner and the community.

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The second World War has brought about vast changes all-over the world ; changes in almost every field of man's activities particularly in the economic sphere. India has not been able to keep out of these economic and social changes and the problem of Indian independence has emerged as the foremost problem. Indeed, all the other problems, though important by themselves, pale into insignificance when compared with this. India has first to pass through the transitional stage, from a slave country to an independent country, and tackle the problems of internal reconstruction. Many people seem to think that the problem of independence should precede all others which should come only at a later stage. It is open to question whether the two can be separated into water-tight compartments. Is it not more advisable to take up both of them concurrently ? To wait for the solution of the political problem would mean the postponement of reconstructional activities for a number of years. Whether the war-torn, hungry, ill-clad millions of India will care to wait patiently during this period, or try to force their way through in spite of the political problem, it is not possible to predict. The recent unrest, both agrarian and industrial, seems to indicate that the twin problems, viz., independence and internal reconstruction, should be tackled at the same time, if we are to have a peaceful evolution.

*Prices and wages.*—The postwar unrest, both agrarian and industrial, particularly the latter, seems to be due in the main to the lag between prices and wages ; no doubt, there are other causes—both economic and political. But the lag between prices and wages provides a very good cause—justly of course—for the unrest. The following figures speak for themselves :

TABLE I •  
Working Class Cost of Living Index

Year	Bombay	Ahmedabad
	1933-34 = 100	1926-27 = 100
1939	106	73
1940	112	79
1941	124	87
1942	157	114
1943	231	206
1944	237	212
1945	235	199
1946	259	209

The working class cost of living index, which was 106 in 1939 in Bombay, has gone up steadily. Throughout the seven years, the figures have gone up almost continuously. In December, 1946, it was estimated to be 279. In Ahmedabad, the cost of living Index has gone up from 73 in 1939 to 209 in 1946. In 1944, it was

even higher, viz., 212—nearly three times the prewar figure. It is interesting to note that the cost of living in Ahmedabad has increased more sharply than in Bombay. On the whole, it can definitely be stated that the cost of living has gone up between  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 times ; it should be noted that this rise relates only to the working class families. The lower middle class families, accustomed as they are to a relatively higher standard of living, must be suffering more than the working class families. This general rise in prices has taken place throughout the country and is, more or less, uniform both in rural and urban areas—with slight variations according to local conditions.

Now, let us consider the increase in wages. The economic dictum that wages tend to follow prices, albeit after a time lag, seems generally to hold good ; but the rise in the former may not always correspond to the rise in the latter. Today, though there has been a wage rise, it is not at all commensurate with the rise in prices. One thing that strikes anyone almost immediately is the confusing rates of wage rise. The following table gives a rough idea of the wage increase in different occupations during the war period :

TABLE II<sup>1</sup>

Percentage Increase in Earning in 1944  
over 1939

Industry	Percentage increase
Engineering ...	123.80
Textiles ...	115.90
Chemicals and Dyes ...	98.00
Wood, Stone and Glass ...	89.70
Mints ...	89.20
Skin and Hides ...	86.20
Ordnance Factories ...	51.10
Paper and Printing ...	42.50
Minerals and Metals ...	25.40
Miscellaneous ...	82.70

It is evident that the rise in wages is not at all uniform : it is just difficult to understand, why, say, a textile labourer should get a rate of increase, which is denied to, say, a miner. Or, within the same industry, why, for example, the textile labourer of Ahmedabad should get more than a fellow-workman of Bombay. Thus, in 1944, the textile labourer of Ahmedabad got Rs. 64/- a month (average), compensating to the extent of 96 per cent of the rise in the cost of living, whereas, in Bombay, it was only Rs. 31/-, compensating to the extent of 76 per cent. All these indicate that the wage rise has apparently been left to the bargaining strength of the parties concerned. This strength naturally varies from place to place and from industry to industry, depending upon local circumstances. It is really strange that the Government did not try to have a uniform policy and left these things to be decided by the bargaining capacities of the parties, specially when the general rise in price levels affects every worker irrespective of the industry he belongs to.

#### *Effects of the rise in wages and prices.—*

Now, let us consider the effects of this price-cum-wage increase both on the industry and the wage earner :

Among others, the following are the important effects on industry :

- (a) Increase in absenteeism,
- (b) Inefficiency, 'go-slow' tactics, indifference and opposition to authority, and
- (c) Sporadic strikes.

Some labour leaders have recently questioned the assumption that higher wages lead to increased absenteeism. They maintain that higher wages have not led to increased absenteeism. It

<sup>1</sup> Indian Labour Gazette, Vol. IV, p. 63 (August, 1946).

is, of course, true that bad housing conditions and bad food, coupled with various other economic difficulties, have aggravated the problem. But these are contributory factors. Can it be really said that higher cash wages at the present time will not lead to increased absenteeism? If the experience of those who are working with labour is of any value, it looks certain that higher cash wages at present lead to increased absenteeism. Though the wage earner gets more 'cash' wages than what he was getting in 1939, it must be remembered that his "real" wages (in terms of the purchasing power of the rupee) have gone down; but the wage earner has the feeling that he is getting more. It is this feeling, this outlook, which has given rise to wasteful expenditure and the cultivation of some socially undesirable habits.

(a) *Absenteeism.*—The following table gives us an idea of the increase in absenteeism in the textile industry :

TABLE III

Year	Bombay	Ahmedabad
1938	8.30	3.30
1939	10.50	3.30
1940	8.89	3.89
1941	9.47	4.19
1942	10.90	5.17
1943	10.81	4.83
1944	11.36	5.69
1945	12.23	6.60
1946	14.16	7.41

In Bombay, the prewar average absenteeism (monthly) was about nine per cent; in Ahmedabad, it was 3.30 per cent. In the year 1946, it was about 14.00 per cent and 7.00 per cent, respectively. In other words,

within a period of seven years, the rate of absenteeism has almost doubled. It is rather difficult to attribute this increase only to bad housing and insufficient and inadequate diet. It is to be noted that the increase in Ahmedabad is greater when compared with Bombay; the difference may not be significant. This is probably due to the relatively high war allowance paid in Ahmedabad.

(b) *The other effects such as inefficiency, 'go-slow' tactics, etc.,* are difficult to prove. It is argued, on behalf of the employers, that the wage earners have become lazy and that they are adopting 'go-slow' tactics; even the Government seems to have the same opinion of labour. On the other hand, the labour leaders contend that there has been no inefficiency nor 'go-slow' tactics; if there is any, it is due to the existing abnormal—both political and industrial—situation in the country which affects industrial labour, just as it affects every other section of the community. So far, neither the employers nor the Government have adduced any concrete proof to show that labour has become lazy and inefficient. All the same, without committing ourselves one way or the other, we may affirm that, of late, labour is generally indifferent to the needs of greater production. The reason for this is to be sought in the existing uncertain position in which labour has been put in. Unless there is some positive evidence to show that the interests of labour will not be overlooked in future, it is difficult to make labour production-conscious. It is the uncertainty as to the future, fear of depression, fear of unemployment, and want of some kind of social security against sickness and old age, that have made labour restive and sometimes even 'aggressive.'

(c) *Sporadic strikes.*—It is common knowledge that the number and scope of strikes have enormously increased during

the last year or two. Strikes have taken place for no substantial reason and, sometimes, even on communal grounds. There is no doubt that these strikes and increased absenteeism have caused considerable reduction in the production of various essential commodities, and this at a time when the country is desperately in need of greater production.

Now, let us consider the effects of this price-cum-wage rise on the wage earner. Generally speaking, it has not done any good to labour; on the other hand, his cash wage increase has degenerated him.

The wage earner just does not know where or how to spend his money. Very few wage earners have got into the habit of saving money, having always received less than what they needed. Secondly, there are no proper outlets for this 'extra' money. It could not be invested on any useful thing such as land or building, as prices have gone very high; it could not be spent on consumer goods, such as vessels or cloth, as they too are scarce and high-priced. Hence, all the income is more or less frittered away in socially undesirable channels.

The average middle class person could not make both ends meet; his income increased, in the aggregate, by 45 per cent in 1944. Accustomed to a higher standard of living and getting relatively less income than the labourer, he cut short his necessities. For example, between 1939 and 1944, the consumption of protective food registered a fall, milk by 18 per cent, ghee by 42 per cent, potatoes by 37 per cent, and meat by 15 per cent.<sup>2</sup> It is yet too early to judge the effects of this on the health and happiness of the people.

*Wages and national economy.*—We have already discussed how the cost of living

has gone up and how far wages have succeeded in catching up prices. As far as one can look into the future, it appears almost certain that prices will remain high for a couple of years more; the post-war price level (when it gets stabilised) is estimated to be higher than the 1939 level by at least 30 per cent. In fact, the Central Pay Commission has based its recommendations on the assumption that prices will remain at about 60-75 per cent above the prewar level. Therefore, we have to discuss the consequences of high prices and high wages at a time like this in India. It is generally agreed that the changes in the economic life of India will be more towards a socialistic economy, rather than towards a capitalistic one. Further, it is safe to assume that shortage of housing, cloth and food will continue for some years more. Bearing in mind that the future economic life of India is more likely to lie in a controlled economy, tending more to the Left than to the Right, is it desirable to allow this process of uncontrolled high-price and high-wage economy to continue? If the experience of the past few years has any significance, it is time that we look back and think where this high-price and high-wage economy has led us to. Will this uncontrolled, unplanned economy help us in anyway for a proper integration of the economic life of India? Is it not necessary that a certain amount of control is imposed upon the various fields of economic life of the country, so that, at the end, we might have a unified, well-planned and regulated economy?

*Do high wages imply high standard of living.*—The idea of giving higher wages to a wage earner is to increase his standard of living, or to enable him to cope up with the increased prices. But is there any

<sup>2</sup> Anjalia, J. J., Lakdawala, D. T. and Pandit, S. A., *War and the Middle Class*, Bombay: Padma Publications Ltd., 1946, p. 15.

reason to think that the higher wages paid have increased the standard of life of the wage earner? It is to be feared that, in many cases, the present wage increase has not even restored the prewar standard of living; much less has it increased the standard of living. On the other hand, this policy has let loose a certain amount of "surplus" money, which, for want of proper opportunities, is being mis-spent with very undesirable consequences, both on the wage earner and also on the internal economy of the country. To take a concrete instance: A textile labourer in Ahmedabad gets about Rs. 50/- as dearness allowance. Now the question is how this money is spent. It cannot be spent on housing, cloth and vessels, as they are either not available or high-priced. Nor is the money likely to be saved, as the wage earner has not been in the habit of doing so. Consequently, the "extra" money is spent on liquor, cinema and such other things which are beneficial neither to him nor to the community. Thus, we are facing a difficult situation. High wages have to be paid because the prices are high. All the wages cannot be spent properly because the consumer commodities and services are scarce, or are very costly. Therefore, the moneys are spent on things readily available or in the black market, both of which are harmful, whether from the point of view of the wage earner or the community. That many urban areas of India are facing such a situation goes without saying. What then is the remedy? It appears we are moving in a vicious circle without ever stopping to think whether it can be broken or not.

*Can higher wages be paid without dislocating the internal economy?*—The problem can be attacked from two directions, viz., (a) Educative and (b) Legislative. It is very necessary that action should be taken in both the fields, and that too simultane-

ously. The process of education is, of course, a long one and cannot be completed within a short period of time. But this is the surest way of solving the problem. At present, the responsibility of the employer ceases the moment he pays the wages. Education of the wage earner to attain a higher standard of living ought to become the duty of the employer. For this, it is necessary that there should be full co-operation between the State, the employer, and the labourer. Indifference or opposition on the part of any one of them is sure to create difficulties. Thereafter, a workable machinery can be evolved to educate the wage earner. To put it briefly, such education would help the wage-earner not only to learn the three R's but also to know the art of living. This process should not be confined either to the school or to the factory; but it must operate on a wide scale and in a number of places simultaneously. For example, starting from the home, the wage earner must be able to learn something, on his way, in the factory, in the club, in his community gatherings, etc. The latest methods of education will have to be used. Unless an all-out attack is made, and that too for a number of years, the process of education will not have any effect. At present, the tendency appears to be to help the wage-earner to learn the three R's after the working hours. If this is the way one goes about to solve the problem of education, it is doubtful whether anything substantial can be achieved even after a number of years. The idea that education is complete by learning the three R's has got to go; education is, and must be considered, a continuous lifetime process.

Along with educational work, a certain amount of legislative action also is absolutely necessary. It is no use saying that the wage earner gets his wages and that it is his business as to how and when to spend

it. No doubt, this way, it is easy for the employer ; but we have already seen the harmful effects of such a policy. Legislative action implies a certain amount of coercion, which many people would oppose. But it must be realised that, in a backward country like India, where every problem seems to be complicated and dependent upon so many others, no real improvement can be effected without coercion.

*Alternatives to a high cash wage.* - The idea of giving wages, at least a part of it, in the shape of commodities and services, is not a new thing in India. The agricultural labourer has, until very recently, got a portion of his wages in the shape of food, cloth, etc. And, therefore, it should not be difficult to adopt this system with necessary changes, so as to suit the urban conditions. There are several advantages in such a system :

- (1) The 'extra' cash wage will not fall into the hands of the illiterate, ignorant employee and thus he will be forced to limit his expenses.
- (2) By the giving of commodities and services, the wage-earner will, more or less, be left with no option but to use them, which will indirectly result in the cultivation of good and useful habits.
- (3) The commodities and services markets themselves might, in due course, be organised in a way which will be in line with the local economy and thus avoid the present 'chaotic' markets. For example, milk is a daily necessity, and still not a single city in India has a proper system of milk production and distribution.

Under our scheme, every wage earner will have to take a portion of his wages in milk ; this will, at one stroke, make the wage earner 'milk-conscious' and, at the same time, help in organising a proper system of milk production and distribution. No doubt, this system has its own drawbacks, e.g., it may give scope to greater corruption, lesser efficiency, etc. Such drawbacks, inevitable as they are in any new scheme, can be avoided, only in course of time and by careful management.

The question as to how and what kind of legislation could possibly be brought about remains to be dealt with now. According to the analysis of working-class family budgets, wages are spent on the following items :

- (1) Food,
- (2) Clothing,
- (3) Rent,
- (4) Fuel and Light, and
- (5) Miscellaneous.

We have to consider whether any or all of these items can be brought within the scope of legislation.

*Food.*—According to the analysis of working-class family budgets made by the Bombay Labour Office during 1932-33, it was found that 46.60 per cent of the earnings is spent on food. During the war and in the postwar years, this percentage must have definitely increased. Expenditure on this item will be either on cooked food or on uncooked food. In the former category comes the expenses in canteens, etc.; in the latter, cereals, vegetables, milk, ghee, etc. In the former case, it is possible to supply food either in canteens (within the factory) or in community kitchens. By law, every employer may be compelled to provide cooked food

according to proscribed rates, within the factory premises. Such a thing was visualised during the war years by the Government under the Defence of India Rules. Since the end of hostilities, the idea seems to have been given up. In case food is taken during non-working hours, community kitchens might be able to supply the food. Such kitchens might be run either by the Government (Central or Provincial) or Local Self-Government authorities. Recently, there has been a move in the direction of establishing such restaurants, both in Delhi and in Hyderabad (Deccan). Such a move is likely to be opposed by the existing vested interests, but this has to be overcome.

In case the wage earner has a home where food is cooked for him, then, it might be possible to supply him such essential articles as cereals, vegetables, milk, oil, etc., monthly or fortnightly, as it is already being done in the Railways, the Port Trust, etc. Though it is a war time measure, its advantages in postwar years cannot be denied.

**Cloth.** Let us examine how legislative action can be brought about in the matter of cloth. Now that the war has brought about cloth scarcity, and cloth rationing has been introduced in big cities, it is not impracticable to give cloth to every employee. As a matter of fact, this system has already been in operation in the Railways, and the Posts and Telegraphs ; but the cloth given is only for official uniforms. It is possible to vary the extent and variety of supply depending upon the industry, number of dependents, and local circumstances. There should be no difficulty in extending this system so as to cover other types of employees like Government servants, factory workers, etc.

**Rent.**—It may be taken that, normally, a wage earner spends about 10 per cent

of his earnings on housing accommodation. But, when low wages are paid, he may have to pay a higher percentage of his wages towards rent. Should it be made legally incumbent on the employer to provide housing accommodation to all employees ? Though this principle seems to have been accepted by some agencies like the Government and Municipalities, in actual practice it appears they are rather content to pay a housing allowance than to provide actual housing accommodation. Paying rent has certain defects in it. An employee need not necessarily spend all that money on housing ; he may spend more or less. Nor is there any guarantee that the person lives in such a place which is conducive to a home atmosphere. Thus, for example, the Bombay Municipality gives a couple (if both are employed and are in 'inferior' service) Rs. 9/- a month as house allowance. Under normal conditions, it is very doubtful whether they would pay this amount as house rent. Possibly, they would have hired a single room somewhere paying a rent of six or seven rupees per month. Further, under normal circumstances, if employees are given the option of having house rent allowance or actual accommodation, it is feared a majority will go in for the former as against the latter. Possibly, some scheme whereby the wage earner can own a house after 25 years might draw them in.

When once the question of housing is satisfactorily solved, the problem of light can easily be dealt with. Now, about fuel. Generally, for cooking purposes, fire-wood, charcoal, saw-dust, etc., are used. It has been the experience of welfare workers that, even when an employee can afford to use charcoal, he is very unlikely to do it—because, saw-dust or fire-wood works out cheaper. This could be dealt with, apart from educational methods, by providing coal, gas, etc.

The remaining part of the wages is spent, among others, on various miscellaneous items like education of children, expenses in connection with visits to their native place, remittances to their relatives, smoking, cinema, etc. We have now to see whether any of these things can be given in the shape of organised services. The following are some of the ways in which such provision could be made ; with more experience, it is possible to go beyond this.

(1) *Railway fare or conveyance charges from the place of residence to the place of work.*—It is a recognised principle that no person should have to spend more than an hour per day, to and fro, to reach his place of work. It probably works out well in smaller towns ; but, in large cities, like Bombay and Calcutta, a wage earner may have to spend even two to three hours for this purpose. Therefore, it would be advisable to provide housing accommodation as near the place of work as possible or, in the alternative, pay the travelling expenses. It might be mentioned that the Central Government employees of certain departments are already getting these charges, if they live beyond a radius of five miles from the place of work. This principle has only to be extended so as to cover the wage earners of all institutions—whether Government or non-Government.

(2) *Travelling charges or railway passes to native places.*—In many of our industrial cities, people come from long distances for the sake of employment. The wages they receive are too meagre to allow them to put by anything to enable them to visit their homes once in every two or three years. It is necessary that the wage earner should be able to have a holiday, and the means for doing so, so that he may be able to keep in touch with his village and also recover his health. If these charges are paid by the

employers, it would certainly encourage the wage earners to use their holidays properly.

(3) *Planned holidays and rest camps.*—In many cases, the wage earners have already lost their connection with their villages and have become practically a part of the urban labour class. Either in sickness, in old age, or for recuperation, they may have no place, nor the means to go to one, if they have any. It would be advisable to arrange holiday tours, rest and recreation camps on the model of the Soviet Republic. If such a provision is not made, and if only leave is provided, it is doubtful whether the wage earner will, or can, use it profitably. In private concerns where an option is given to the employees—either a fortnight's leave or extra pay in lieu—it has been the experience that the wage earner, by and large, prefers the latter. Under such circumstances, it is imperative that some provision should be made whereby every wage earner should be able to use his holidays for rest and recreation.

(4) *Health insurance for the wage earner and his dependents.*—The living and working conditions of wage earners in industrial cities are by no means satisfactory. It is estimated that, on an average, a wage earner loses at least a fortnight every year on account of minor illnesses. Nor are the provisions for treatment and recuperation satisfactory. The principle of health insurance has been accepted by the Central Government. It is to be hoped that it will be on a wide basis, covering not only the wage earners of major industries but also of those in smaller and unorganised industries and institutions.

(5) *Provident fund, pension, gratuity, etc.*—Government and major industrial concerns have already accepted the principle involved and all of them have



some scheme or the other whereby the wage earner gets something in his old age. But it must be remembered that there is no legal provision which will put all these various benefits on a uniform basis. For example, it is not understood why Government should pay pension, while the Railways pay provident fund. Such disparities exist in commercial concerns to a greater extent. It is very necessary to have some provision by means of which all these could be brought under some uniform basis.

(6) *Education of children.* Children are the future citizens and as such no state can afford to leave the problem of child education to the likes and dislikes of either the parents or the employers. Statutory provision has to be made to make education upto fourteen years compulsory.

(7) *Technical training.*—The question of providing technical training to the wage earner, wherever they are in skilled occupations, has, so far, received scanty attention both at the hands of the Government and the employers. The future industrialisation of India depends upon the technical personnel available; without the necessary personnel, no scheme of industrialisation can be put through successfully. It is, therefore, necessary that the parties concerned, viz., the state, employers, and employees should evolve a plan of technical training in the various industries. If necessary, the wage earner may be made to pay a certain fee, to cover a part of the expenses of training.

(8) *Welfare work.*—With the progress of industrialisation and urbanisation, it is necessary to find out ways and means for

the proper use of leisure time of the wage earner. In addition to the prevention of the wage earner from getting into bad habits, welfare work, scientifically carried out, helps to develop the personality of the wage earner, which, in turn, helps to keep up the 'morale' of labour. As the Royal Commission on Labour has pointed out: the labourer is "pushed" and not "pulled" into the city by the various economic forces and it is advisable to help him settle down to a particular profession in a community where he can really feel at home.

(9) *Small savings schemes.*—During the war, these savings schemes were designed and put into operation with two objects: (a) to fight inflation, and (b) to help the wage earner by enabling him to save at least a part of his hard earned money, so that it might be put to a better use in future. Though the war is over, the abnormal situation created by the war still exists. Therefore, it is necessary that some scheme should be evolved, whereby the ordinary wage earner can be made to save a part of his earnings.

To put it briefly, the aim of the State ought to be to pay the wage earners in such a way that it really helps both the wage earners and the community. Further, the system should be so adjusted that it may ultimately lead to an integrated national economy. No doubt, all this implies a certain amount of coercion; but, it is doubtful, whether any country in such a transitional period can allow the high-wage and the high-price policy to drift without destroying the very foundations of internal economy.

## NOTES AND NEWS

### FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WORK IN 1948

"International social work, whether carried on under intergovernmental auspices or through voluntary organizations, expresses the feeling of common social interest in one another of the peoples of the world" (*Social Work Year Book*, 1947, New York : Russell Sage Foundation).

World War II has almost knit the whole world as a single family unit and as such it has also awakened a common interest in suffering humanity throughout the world. Social work—as a healing panacea to human suffering—has long been recognized as a noble effort. But, as an after-effect of a global catastrophe, all men and women are looking forward for greater co-ordination in international social work. It is, indeed, a very happy augury that the fourth International Conference of Social Work is going to be held in the United States of America in 1948. It may be recalled here that the first International Conference of Social Work was held in Paris in 1928 with 2481 delegates from 42 countries participating, while the second conference on the general theme of *Social Work and the Family* was held in 1932 at Frankfurt, and the third in 1936 in London on *Social Work and the Community*—the last to be convened before the war.

At a preliminary meeting in 1946 at Brussels, this decision to hold the next International Conference of Social Work in

the United States was taken. A preparatory meeting will be held in Hague in 1947, when matters relating to membership and a permanent plan of organization and operation will be developed. The first full dress session of the Conference will be held in 1948 as indicated earlier.

According to its constitution, "The International Conference of Social Work is non-governmental, non-political and non-sectarian. It does not formulate resolutions relating to the objects discussed. No member can be bound in any way by the Conference."

The founding of the International Conference of Social Work was due largely to the demonstration of the contribution of the National Conference of Social Work to the progress of public and private welfare in North America.

There is no doubt that private international co-operative effort in the field of social work will go a long way in international goodwill and peace. Let us also hope that in future International Conferences of Social Work will be held more regularly than before. It is significant that social workers in India are planning to hold an All-India Conference of Social Work in November next in Bombay, and, we hope, that it would extend its co-operation to the International Conference of Social Work.

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### ALL-INDIA CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WORK

With the rapidly changing times and the new outlook in the country, the minds of all earnest citizens are turning to constructive ways of finding solutions to the socio-economic problems of the people.

Social workers have taken their due share, so far, in measures for the amelioration and relief of the country and of the people. The efforts, though laudable, have been diffused and unco-ordinated, and often

unplanned. This results in considerable waste of energy and resources. What appears to be urgently needed is a common platform and organization to discuss the problems, procedures and methods of social workers and to co-ordinate them, as far as possible, so that more scientific and efficient methods of field work and relief of distress and disabilities could be evolved and planned for the country as a whole.

With this object in view, the Alumni Association of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences convened a meeting of the representatives of various social service agencies and prominent social workers in the city of Bombay and suburbs in May, 1947. The meeting decided to hold an All-India Conference of Social Work with the following objects :

- (i) To bring together social workers and representatives of social service agencies in India in a Conference,

- (ii) To discover possibilities of providing facilities for the exchange of ideas between them on the subject of social work, and

- (iii) To take steps towards the establishment of an all-India body of social workers under the name "All-India Conference of Social Work."

The Working Committee, comprising of eminent social workers from Bombay, elected for the purpose has decided provisionally to hold the Conference on the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th of November, 1947, in Bombay.

Besides the question of forming an all-India body of social workers, papers and discussions, and resolutions, if any, pertaining to the different sections in which the work of the Conference will be divided will form the agenda of the Conference.

#### HEALTH INSURANCE IS WIDESPREAD IN THE UNITED STATES

Public participation in voluntary health insurance plans in the United States has more than doubled since the end of the war, according to competent official estimates. There were about 6,000,000 persons enrolled in some form of such plans at the beginning of this year compared to 2,500,000 in the spring of 1945. This fact marks a trend toward preventive rather than curative medicine and explains in part many recent proposals for universal health insurance. In addition to these figures, rapid expansion has been noted in prepayment plans for hospital costs alone. The most important of these is known as the Blue Cross, which protects nearly 20,000,000 people and has a membership of 3,200 hospitals. For a small monthly payment, this organization, like others of its kind, pays for the insured person's room and

routine services at any of the member hospitals in case of illness or injury.

Group health insurance began in the United States in connection with certain hazardous industries, such as lumbering, mining and railroading. It was given great impetus and was joined by many employers in 1911 upon enactment of the first workers' compensation law requiring employers to compensate their workmen for injuries. The system worked so well that both employees and employers began extending their insurance to include all kinds of illness and injury even when not connected with the employee's service. Some employers furnished medical service without charge because it improved morale and reduced days lost. In other cases, the workers paid the full amount of health insurance to

protect themselves against the sudden impact of family misfortune.

In the 1920's, groups of physicians operating private clinics began to furnish medical care on a prepayment basis, and groups of citizens, seeing the advantage of spreading their medical costs over longer periods, solicited such arrangements from groups of doctors. This practice grew into the consumer-sponsored type of plan, including co-operatives which have their own hospitals. Then the American Medical Association introduced the medical society plan in 1939—the most popular of them all. In the six years following 1939, 37 medical society prepayment arrangements were formed in 31 out of the 48 states of the Union. Twelve new ones are now in the process of formation and the enrolment has doubled during the past year.

Also, within the past few years, county and state governments and the Federal Government have entered the field from the approach of the employer to protect employees or itinerant workers for whom they feel responsible. Because of the public significance of the health insurance movement, the Bureau of Research and Statistics of the Social Security Board has studied its growth and has issued a report on its progress each three years.

*Balance between charges and medical services.*—The Bureau states that all these programmes have one or more of the following objectives: "To effect a balance between medical charges and medical services by pooling risks and costs, to minimize overhead expenses, and to assure regular incomes for practitioners." "In principle," the Bureau continues, "all types of arrangements are alike in providing a mechanism for continuous availability of medical personnel and facilities and for protecting the individual or family from large medical expenditure at a time when illness cuts

off income or adds other strains to the family budget."

The Bureau has made a detailed study of 235 plans for its latest report. The plans studied guarantee medical services to more than 5,000,000 persons of the estimated 6,000,000 total. They are divided into 116 industrial plans, 57 medical society plans, 22 private group clinics, 32 consumer-sponsored plans, and eight governmental plans. By far the largest number of members belonged to the plans sponsored by state and county medical societies. Altogether, the Bureau estimates, there are probably about 6,000,000—some five per cent of the non-institutional civilian population of the United States—who have "some degree of protection against the unpredictable costs of medical care through membership in a prepayment medical care organization or as dependents of members of such organizations."

Since all of these plans are voluntary and, therefore, not universal, certain restrictions to membership have been found necessary. For instance, physical examinations are required in most cases and an extra charge, sometimes, is made for conditions existing at the time the member joins the plan. Some plans place age restrictions upon new members since elderly persons, who require more than average medical attention, are a greater insurance risk. A small number of plans are open only to persons within specified income brackets.

Universal health insurance, which would eliminate all restrictions to membership, has been proposed in a number of forms in the United States. The Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill, which provides for personal health service on a compulsory insurance basis, was debated in the 79th Congress from April to the middle of

July, 1946. It brought to Washington the nation's most noted authorities on the medical, economic and social aspects of health problems and thoroughly aired them in public hearings. Similar bills are under various stages of discussion in the

current Congress and a variety of new legislation is under consideration in many of the 48 states of the Union. In each case, the voluntary health insurance plans now in effect will furnish a background of valuable experience.

#### VISITING NURSES SUPPLEMENT PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

There are approximately 25,000 public health nurses in the United States, working in crowded cities, small towns, or remote country districts. They may be employed by the school or the county; they may be industrial nurses or part of a city Health Department. Or they may work for a Visiting Nurses Association, as privately financed public health agencies in the United States are usually called.

Women employed by these Visiting Nurses Associations are graduate registered nurses with specialized training and experience in the field of public health. Many schools of nursing in the United States offer post-graduate courses of theoretical and practical training in public health work. Three institutes in the country now offer a basic professional curriculum leading to a degree preparing their students for practice in the home, the hospital, or public health agency. Nurses also may acquire the necessary additional training on a part-time basis while on the job.

*Services extended to all who are ill.*—Visiting Nurses Associations are privately financed, and they extend their services to all who are ill, regardless of the ability of the patient to pay. Financial support for their work is provided in a number of ways. Part of their funds may come from fees paid by individual patients. A number of insurance companies contract to pay for the care of certain types of their policy-holders. Money may come from foundation endowments and partly

from county or state health department funds set aside for the purpose. About half of the money used by these voluntary agencies is received from contributions from individuals or from the Community Chest funds for charitable purposes collected in annual drives.

The job of the visiting nurse is important both to the community and to the nation. Each day approximately 6,000,000 persons in the United States are sick. Only 20 per cent of these are hospital cases, leaving the vast majority to be cared for in their homes and that is the primary job of the visiting nurse. Her services may include general medical and surgical nursing, maternity nursing—including pre-natal care, child and orthopaedic nursing. Often, she must also counsel a family on problems relating to physical and mental health.

*Educators in public health.*—The visiting nurse plays the role of educator in the field of public health, instructing families in the fundamentals of home nursing or teaching infant care. By group teaching, expectant mothers may be given the opportunity to receive scientific information, ask questions, and share in the discussion of mutual problems. The visiting nurse knows that health begins at home and that well-balanced and nutritious meals are essential in keeping the family health up to par. Therefore, she helps promote better health by guiding families in budget and diet planning.

The visiting nurse often acts as the go-between for individuals and other community welfare services. From her personal and intimate contact with indigent families she may, through her knowledge of other community services, supply the guidance needed in cases out of her own fields, or she may notify other agencies of cases needing their specialized attention.

The visiting nurse likewise plays a vital role in helping private doctors and public health officials ward off sickness, and is indispensable in the control of tuberculosis and various communicable diseases.

*First association established in 1886.*—The first Visiting Nurses Association in the United States was established in Buffalo, New York, in 1886. The success of the work of the Buffalo agency encouraged other areas to set up similar establishments, and by 1912 there were about 800 agencies in the United States using visiting nurses' services.

To co-ordinate the work and set up standards for these scattered health programmes, leading American nurses met at a convention in Chicago, Illinois, in June, 1912, and founded the National Organization of Public Health Nursing—the NOPHN—the headquarters of which are now located in New York City. The NOPHN is not an administrative agency; it merely acts in a centralized advisory capacity in the field of public health nursing.

Its general purpose is to promote high standards of efficiency in public health nursing and to act as an information centre. To accomplish this, various publications are made available both to members and non-members. Its monthly magazine *Public Health Nursing* contains the latest information in the field gleaned from nation-wide sources. In addition to this regular periodical, it issues, at nominal fees, pamphlets and bulletins covering all

phases of public health work, including administration, mental hygiene, communicable diseases, industrial nursing, and nursing education and supervision.

To assist in the promotion of better relations between agencies and the public, the NOPHN issues pamphlets on public information procedures, and makes available cuts and posters for use in health displays.

It sponsors what was formerly known as "Public Health Nursing Day" but was widened to "Your Public Nurse Week" in 1946. The co-operation of radio stations, newspapers, health departments, social work councils, and nursing organizations made the observance a great success. The film "Your Friend, the Public Health Nurse," produced by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in collaboration with the NOPHN, was shown hundreds of times during the "Week," and, a leaflet prepared to accompany it went into several large editions.

A recent NOPHN News Bulletin advises that "a foundation grant for preparation of leaflets and radio transcriptions will make possible next year not only more effective publicity for the 'Week' but assistance throughout the year to communities wishing information of public health nursing."

The NOPHN has grown steadily in strength and scope as the field of public health work has expanded. It has kept step with the rapid developments in preventive medicine and the significant social and scientific movements of the time. During the war, the NOPHN helped to organize public health services in parts of the country where the influx of war industries had created great and sudden over-population with its attendant evils of inadequate housing and hospital care.

*Need for services increased*—Peace has not brought any lessening of the need for public health nurses. Thousands of disabled veterans require and will continue to require home nursing, and the end of the war has increased rather than relieved the nursing shortage in the United States. Retirement of older nurses, advantage taken of educational opportunities offered veterans by many demobilized nurses, rest periods found necessary for others, and an increased marriage rate are contributing factors in the situation. The NOPHN estimates that an additional 40,000 public health nurses will be needed in the United States.

The NOPHN Committee on Post-war Planning has developed an integrated pro-

gramme for nationwide action in the field of public health. Its main points are :

- (1) Maintenance and development of nursing services ;
- (2) A programme of nursing education ;
- (3) Channels and means for distributing nursing services ;
- (4) Implementation of standards to protect the best interests of the public and the nurse ; and
- (5) An information and public relations programme.

The role played by the visiting nurse will be a vital one in this entire programme.

#### HEALTH OF THE INDIAN WORKER

The war gave a fillip to the industrial development of India, and India already has seven or eight million industrial workers. Every realistic programme for raising the standard of living of the country anticipates a great and rapid expansion of this number. The famous Bombay "Plan of Economic Development"<sup>1</sup> stands or falls by its estimate that the income from industry can be increased fivefold in the next fifteen years. It is in this context that two recent reports on industrial health should be studied.<sup>2,3</sup>

The present situation is bad. Protective laws are inadequate and their enforcement lax. The factory inspecting staff is too small, and inspection is too often perfunctory and uninformed :

"At one (pottery) factory, I saw women scouring cups with sand paper. There was no provision for the removal

of dust, and the women blew the dust from the ware into the atmosphere. One woman had a small child aged about two years sitting beside her and each time the mother blew...her baby inhaled silica dust...The factory inspector's only reaction was that the child was too young to be in a factory...the factory was too small to provide a creche...The inspector smilingly conveyed the information to me, and he was evidently perfectly satisfied."<sup>3</sup>

Trade-unionism is weak. Hours of work are excessive for the subtropics, particularly for women and young persons. Welfare and canteen services have hardly made a beginning. Modern knowledge on the physiology of working conditions is rarely applied :

"In the majority of factories...roofs have been of a single layer of corrugated

<sup>1</sup> *A Plan of Economic Development for India*, London, 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the Health Survey and Development Committee (Bhore Committee)*, Delhi, 1946, Vol. 1. p. 71; Vol. II. p. 122.

<sup>3</sup> Bedford, T., *The Health of the Industrial Worker in India*, Simla, 1946.

iron. Of all the roof materials that could have been chosen, this is the worst. Its thermal insulating value is practically zero. It is dirty. Its outer surface absorbs virtually all the solar radiation which strikes it..."<sup>3</sup>

The Bhore Committee accepted the principles laid down by the Royal College of Physicians<sup>4</sup> and recommended the establishment of industrial health services as an integral part of provincial health organizations. The Committee also urged early action on other matters—for instance, reducing hours of work to 45 per week; raising the age-limit for young persons from 12 to 15 years in factories and to 13 in "plantations and public works"; prohibiting the employment of women underground in coal mines; maternity benefits for 12 weeks. It also suggested the setting up of departments of industrial medicine in certain medical schools.

Bedford, who spent three months in India at the invitation of the government, draws on his experience with the Industrial Health Research Board in making a series of recommendations on factory hygiene and working conditions and includes a comprehensive programme for research. He discusses frankly and helpfully the crucial problem how to raise the productivity of the Indian worker from its present level of a quarter or half that of the worker in the West to at least the two-thirds which has already been achieved in a few exceptional cases. Primitive organisation and methods of work, owing to lack of capital on the one hand and the chronic ill

health and poor education of the workers on the other, are mainly responsible for the low output. Many other factors are also involved, as Bedford shows: the high temperature of factories, insufficient lighting, overstaffing, and the high turnover of labour. The low output per man-hour, moreover, is a cause of low wages; it raises prices and lowers purchasing power, thus further depressing the health of the working population.

Both reports recognise the futility of improving factory conditions while ignoring the even more pressing needs of housing and nutrition. Present housing standards are abysmally low, and the slums of Bombay, Calcutta, Cawnpore, and other cities are a negation of all that is meant by health. The future may well lie with the new methods of building being perfected in Britain and America. The beautiful plan for Jamshedpur, the Tata steel town, which was recently published,<sup>5</sup> contains, for example, proposals for a prefabricated, 460 sq. ft. super, three-room bungalow, reasonably insulated and with indoor water and sanitation, costing £60, ex-works, which could be let at less than 10s. a month. Such a development on a generous scale could revolutionise Indian urban life.

India's industry has made an unhappy start. There may yet be time to avoid some of the errors that accompanied industrialisation and the growth of towns in England in the 19th century. Repeated in subtropical circumstances the industrial revolution is likely to have special horrors of its own.

—*The Lancet* (Jan. 25, 1947).

#### HYDERABAD STARTS MOBILE CANTEENS

Much has been made by the industrialist of the difficulties involved in the establishment of factory canteens. In order,

therefore, to set an example of how this could be done, the Hyderabad Government has started with a Mobile Canteen Scheme.

<sup>4</sup> Royal College of Physicians of London, *Second Interim Report of Social and Preventive Medicine Committee*, 1945.

<sup>5</sup> Koenigsberger, O., *Jamshedpur Development Plan*, Bombay, 1946 (Circulated privately).



The Mobile Canteen aims at providing wholesome, nutritionally balanced and hygienically cooked food at very cheap prices. At the moment, the Mobile Canteen serves a pound of "Haleem" or "Porridge" either with meat or vegetables for two annas. A glass of iced butter milk is sold for four pies, together with groundnut chocolates for another four pies. A full meal weighing more than a pound thus costs less than three annas. This indicates what an advance it represents over food cooked and sold by the cafes and restaurants.

The above menu represents nearly 1000 calories, plus proteins and fats. All this at two annas is really a very welcome contribution to the diet of the labourer who finds it impossible to get such well-

cooked food at his house for such a low price. Besides "Haleem," rice cooked as "Khubuli" is also sold as an alternative to break the monotony of the menu as are also *chapatis*, sweets, steamed vegetables and meat in different forms. These latter are more expensive, yet, very much cheaper than in a restaurant. All stocks of these food items of the Mobile Canteen are finished long before the end of the trip, and not as yet has a day passed when anything was brought back unsold to the Depot. The popularity of the Scheme has led the Government to expand the present two Mobile Units to twelve for the city of Hyderabad, two for Warangal and one for Gulberga. —*Feeding the Worker (Canteens in Industry)*, No. 10 (December, 1946).

#### PHYSIOTHERAPY IN INDUSTRY

At their Neath tin-plate factory in Glamorgan, the Metal Box Company have installed a fully equipped physiotherapy department. Treatments are similar to the outpatient department of a general hospital, muscular, joint, nerve lesions, electro-therapy, etc., the advantages being that employees are treated in works time irrespective of whether the disability was caused at work or not. The company provides the service free without loss of wages to the patient. Both sister-in-charge

of the surgery and physiotherapist are co-opted members of the health and safety sub-committee to whom monthly reports are submitted.

The factory employs an excess of the quota required under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, and attempts to ensure the greatest possible restoration of normal function by placing these people in jobs suited to their capacity. —*Industrial Welfare and Personnel Management*, Vol. XXIX, p. 69 (March-April, 1947).

#### RESETTLING EX-SERVICES PERSONNEL

The number of persons placed in employment by the Resettlement and Employment Organisation of the Government of India in February, 1947 was 11,380, bringing the total number of persons thus placed up to the end of that month to 1,39,961. The placings include appointments to 56,421 vacancies in Central and Provincial Government Departments and 7,692 to

reserved vacancies in the Railway Administrations.

Direct employment assistance to which these statistics relate forms only a part of the activities of the Central and Provincial Governments in regard to resettling ex-Services Personnel. Other forms of assistance offered to returning ex-Servicemen,

to mention only a few, are provisions for technical and vocational training and for resettlement on land through land colonization schemes, facilities for setting up co-

operative societies, issue of yarn and other specific commodity permits, further education, etc. --*Indian Information*, Vol. 20, p. 395 (April 15, 1947).

### GIRL SCOUT ACTIVITIES

The Girl Scouts of the United States, a nation-wide organization, for 34 years has aimed at the development of better citizens through leisure-time activities during the formative years. Part of an international scouting movement, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts with members in 48 different countries, the organization in the United States now has more than one million members.

During the National Girl Scout Week, October 27 to November 2, they demonstrated to their communities how they are working to carry out their part in a postwar plan of citizenship in action around the world. In their green dresses with yellow ties and their berets with the clover-leaf badges, recognized all over the world as the Girl Scout costume, they dedicated each day to a special activity.

Girl scouting supplements the things a girl learns at home, at school and in church, and by giving her wider interests, wholesome recreation and work projects, enables her to become a better citizen of her country and of the world. The organization is planned for all girls with no barriers of race, creed, nationality, economic or social level, and includes girls who are physically handicapped as well as the hardy, outdoor type.

*Activities cover many fields.*—Girl Scout activities in the United States cover ten general fields: international friendship, homemaking, community life, health and safety, arts and crafts, literature and dramatics, music and dancing, sports and games,

and out-of-doors living. The programme is divided into three different age groups so that activities may be adapted to the age and ability of the girls to assure maximum participation and enjoyment.

For the neophyte Brownies, ages seven to ten years, the groups are small enough for leaders to cope with, yet large enough for the members to learn responsibility and co-operation with others.

The Girl Scouts themselves, ages ten to fourteen years, have larger "troops." They plan and carry out their own projects, working toward definite goals of achievement recognized by proficiency badges.

The Senior Girl Scouts take an active part in community services, and have projects ranging from vocational exploration and personal grooming to forest and wild life conservation and aviation.

The girls in each community are organized into one or more "troops" which consist of from 16 to 24 girls with an adult acting as a guide and counsellor. Each troop is a miniature democracy, the girls electing their own officers, conducting their meetings, discussing and planning what they want to do and how to do it. Each girl has a vote in the troop's affairs and assumes responsibility for some part of a project. All girls pay dues and work together to finance their various undertakings. They equip and decorate their clubroom and are responsible for their troop's budget. They abide by majority rule, yet learn to respect the wishes and ideas of the minority.

*Programme well-integrated.*—The entire programme ties into a systematic continuation of interests. Brownie scouts who planted backyard gardens in 1939 are the farm aides of 1946 who help get in the nation's harvests. Girls who learned to weave or carve later qualify as occupational therapy aides. Others who won their badges in child care, first aid or home nursing become nurses aides in hospitals and nursery centre assistants.

Girl Scouts gave millions of hours of service during the war to such agencies as the Red Cross, local civilian defense councils, ration boards, hospitals, orphanages, libraries and relief agencies. They helped with all sorts of salvage campaigns for paper, fats and tin cans. They sold war bonds and stamps, worked in victory gardens and day nurseries, and participated in Share-the-Food and other collection drives for food and clothing for the allied nations.

*Seek contact abroad.*—Interest in international friendship continues to grow faster than interest in any other field of the organization's activities. In a recent nationwide survey to find out what its members want to accomplish, Girl Scouts asked for more world friendship activities. They want to correspond with similar organizations abroad, to exchange ideas and information about scouting and about their respective countries. They want to study the language and country of these scouts and look forward to exchanging visits. Canadian and United States Girl Scout troops have exchanged visits and camps for many years. In the summer of 1946, one troop from the United States visited Girl Guide camps in England.

Many Girl Scout troops in the United States already are corresponding with such troops abroad. The national headquarters received a letter from a Polish

girl wanting to exchange ideas on education with Girl Scouts in the United States. A troop in the United States that had a project of sending candy to girls in liberated areas recently received a letter written in Braille on rough brown paper from a troop of blind Girl Scouts in Paris. The letter expressed the thanks of the French girls for the candy and asked that the girls in America write them, especially about projects for the blind.

Girl Scouts throughout the United States are enthusiastically making Friendship Bags which are sent through co-operating relief agencies to girls in liberated countries. Each gay drawstring bag of cotton is filled with needles, thread, toothbrush and tooth-paste, bobbie pins, hair ribbon and comb, soap, washcloth, pencils and crayons, notebook, hard candy, games or trinkets. Pictures of the troop and addresses to encourage correspondence are enclosed. Other troops made special collections of toys and books and sent them overseas for Christmas.

*Juliette Low Fund.*—The Juliette Low World Friendship Fund, supported by the Girl Scouts in honor of the founder of scouting in the United States, aids children abroad, and contributes to international scouting camps and scholarships. Money from this fund has been donated, for instance, to the model orphanage at Koloshan, China. Food, clothing and medical supplies have been purchased and shipped to British, Russian, Greek and French children. Uniforms, handbooks and money have been given to help re-establish Girl Scout troops in the Philippines, Guam, Italy and Greece. A special collection of "Friendship" pennies bought chests of recreational and medical supplies to equip members of the National Girl Scout staff working with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

In the nation's capital, Girl Scout troops are particularly interested in international friendship projects. They visit the various embassies and legations where members of the embassy staff have prepared programmes of motion pictures, exhibits and talks on customs and girl scouting of their countries. The visits are climaxed by serving refreshments typical of the country represented.

Eighteen former Girl Scouts from European and South American countries, now working in Washington, voluntarily organized an international patrol to foster better understanding between Girl Scouts in the United States and those abroad. They visit local scout troops, telling them of their experiences with the "underground" and of rehabilitation work abroad, and teach the girls their folk songs, dances and handicraft.

*Training in homemaking.*—Homemaking, another popular Girl Scout activity, includes learning about, planning and cooking well-balanced family meals, taking care of and making clothes, and helping in day nurseries.

Health and safety programmes are not mere textbook studies of safety practices. The girls work with their community authorities to learn first aid and child care, and how to put health programmes into actual practices. In many towns, Girl Scouts work with the United States Public Health Service to eliminate breeding places of mosquitos that carry malaria and yellow fever.

Girl Scouts learn citizenship through action. A troop of Brownies saw how government works when they visited the local post office and the postmaster told them exactly what happens to a letter from the time it is mailed until it is delivered to its destination. In another town, which had developed an acute housing shortage the Girl Scouts, at the mayor's request, made a housing survey—compiling a list of available rooms, apartments and houses.

Camping and outdoor living provide relaxation and fun as well as a knowledge and understanding of natural resources, handicrafts, and experience in group co-operation. Whether the camping trip is for one day or several weeks, thousands of girls enjoy hiking, swimming, boating, nature study, folk dancing and community singing.

In handicraft work they have an activity that cuts across barriers of language and national boundaries. They study the development of American art patterns and those from other lands and make their own designs for pottery, for personal accessories, and for decorating their clubrooms.

Following their motto, "Be Prepared," today, through their varied activities, they are training for homemaking, for jobs and for citizenship in action to build a better and peaceful world.

Girl Scouting in the United States has grown from one troop of 12 girls in 1912 to 1,154,283 members in 1946. There are members in every state, in Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico and Guam.

#### UNIVERSITIES AND LABOUR CO-OPERATE IN WORKERS' EDUCATION

More than 75 institutions of higher learning in the United States now provide students and members of the community with a wide variety of courses in workers' education. Recent growth in this field is described in *A Report on Labour Education in*

*Universities*, prepared under the direction of Dr. Caroline F. Ware of American University in Washington, D. C. Both the labour movement and the universities benefit from these courses, for which representatives of industry and education

have co-operatively developed a successful approach as well as a variety of materials and techniques, the writer points out.

Since such courses are still in the experimental stage, curricula differ greatly in type and length. The oldest of the university labour education programmes is that of the Wisconsin University School for Workers, established in 1925. Since that date, other universities and colleges - Harvard, Yale, Chicago, Michigan, Cornell, Rhode Island State, Illinois, Wayne (Detroit), Pennsylvania State and Hampton Institute - have added such courses to their schedules.

*Courses in Harvard and Yale.* - In 1942, Harvard initiated the Harvard Trade Union Fellowship with the aim of providing training in executive responsibility. The recently established full-time residence course in labour deals with procedures involved in "negotiating, launching and administering trade union agreements."

At the Yale University Labour and Management Centre, representatives of labour unions as well as company managements may register for special classes in economics and labour relations.

The University of Michigan programme has as its main objective aiding workers to cope with day-to-day problems in relation to union organization and operation, collective bargaining and use of community resources. This project operates on a special grant from the State Legislature for experimental work in adult education.

The New York State School of Industrial and Labour Relations, established at Cornell University in 1945 by an act of the State Legislature, offers a four-year undergraduate programme leading to a bachelor's degree, as well as a number of graduate courses.

Plans for the recently-established Institute of Labour Relations at the University of Illinois include the development of

research studies, and of undergraduate as well as graduate programmes in industrial relations. Extension courses in this field will be offered both on and off the campus.

One important obstacle to the present expensive development of such projects, Dr. Ware notes, is the shortage of properly qualified teaching personnel. To guide universities in the selection and recruitment of teachers, a group of authorities on labour education have listed what they regard as essential qualifications for teaching in this field. They hold that one important requisite is a knowledge of the labour movement and its function and structure. Others are participation in some form of worker education activities; a record of successful work in a co-operative or group activity; knowledge of community organizations and Government agencies as helpful resources in a workers' education programme. Dr. Ware believes that colleges and universities can play a leading role in the preparation and training of teachers in this field.

Not only labour and educational groups, but leaders in business, industry and Government have given wide publicity and approval to the expansion of labour education and training. Business management, speaking through the United States Chamber of Commerce, has stressed its vital importance. A member of Congress, urging further Federal activity in worker education, has declared: "That way lies peace and prosperity for labour, employers, farmers and professional people." Addressing a labour education conference in Cleveland, Ohio, in January of this year, Assistant Secretary of Labour, John W. Gibson, stated that the "tremendous growth of interest, throughout the country, in workers' education is to me one of the most significant developments in the labour movement within the past decade."

## SOCIAL SERVICE CADRE ESTABLISHED IN HYDERABAD

H.E.H. the Nizam's Government have established a Social Service Cadre, consisting of gazetted and non-gazetted posts, which will function as a separate branch of the Revenue Department. Scientific planning has thereby been extended to the social sphere, and the services of officers expert in problems of rural reconstruction will become available for rehabilitation work among the most backward sections of the population. While social work in industrial areas remains in charge of the Welfare Officers of the Labour Department, the newly constituted Social Service will concentrate exclusively on rural areas.

*Systematic investigation.*-- Baron C. Von Furer-Haimendorf, Adviser to H.E.H. the Nizam's Government for Tribes and Backward Classes and Professor of Anthropology in the Osmania University, who will be at the head of the new Social Service, has for the last seven years been engaged in sociological research in backward tracts (including certain tribal areas on the North-East Frontier) and has more recently initiated aboriginal education and rehabilitation schemes in the various parts of the Dominions. The success of these schemes, particularly of the Gond education scheme in Adilabad District, demonstrates the value of a scientific approach to social problems of the Indian countryside. In each case systematic and intensive investigation, sometimes extending over more than one year and preceding practical work and research, as the indispensable preliminary to construction, will occupy an important place among the activities of the Social Service. Close connection will be maintained between the Revenue Department and the School of Sociology and Anthro-

pology in the Osmania University, to whose students the new Service offers a wide field for scientific and practical work; indeed the Social Service Scheme provides for a number of scholarships for the students of Anthropology.

*Scope of the scheme.*--The activities of the Social Service will not be confined to areas with tribal populations. The lessons learnt and the experience gained in the education and economic rehabilitation of aboriginals will be applied to other backward populations.

*Link.*--The primary function of the Social Service Officers will be to act as a link between the backward rural populations and Government.

*Regaining confidence.*--To create confidence is the first step in all Social Work; and confidence in the good-will and the altruism of the higher classes of society is today sadly lacking among backward and depressed communities. But confidence can be restored, and the example of Adilabad shows that within the short span of five years neglected and disaffected tribesmen, intensely suspicious of all outsiders, can be transformed into valuable citizens.

*Hyderabad leads the way.*--In many countries with backward populations, such as Australia, Oceania and Africa, social anthropologists have for long been associated with the administration. But, in India, Hyderabad is the first State to apply scientific principles to social planning and to create a direct link between academic sociological research and the administrative services of the State. --*Hyderabad Information*, Vol. VII, No. 6, pp. 42-43 (March, 1947).

## • EXPERIMENT IN TRAINING AMERICAN YOUTH

Recently, the George Junior Republic at Freeville, in New York State, began

a two-day celebration commemorating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of

what has proved to be a unique and highly successful social experiment. The Junior Republic, founded in 1896 by William R. George, remains an original contribution to youth training, and through adherence to its founder's four major principles of self-government, self-support, recreation and service, has taught boys and girls who were once regarded as misfits and potential delinquents to assume responsibility and develop into worth-while citizens.

The George Junior Republic is a private educational institution, not a reform school, whose aim is to take boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 17 who seem headed in the wrong direction and put them on the right track before they get into serious trouble. By earning their own living and by running their own government they find out for themselves why law and order are necessary. The "citizens" of the republic are young people classified by parents, teachers and social workers as "difficult" or "problem children", although there are even a few actual delinquents recommended by judges and welfare agencies to attend the republic as an alternative to reform school.

The republic had its beginnings in the 1890's when William R. George began taking "toughies" off New York City streets for summer vacations at his 500 acre farm in upper New York State. He soon discovered that the summer guests took everything they were offered—avidly and without thanks—and he realized that his philanthropic gesture was doing more harm than good and in reality pauperizing the boys. Therefore, he conceived the idea of keeping at the farm those who were willing to do a share of the work—willing to earn their way and maintain their self-respect.

*Has own economic system.*—From this humble start the Junior Republic has grown into an establishment of more than 18

buildings which include cottages, a school, a chapel, a print shop, machine shops, carpenter shops and a civic centre. It has an economic system of its own, a full-fledged employment system and a government run by the youngsters along the lines of any typical small American community.

Each citizen of the republic is self-supporting, using the republic currency which is called "chink". Out of this chink, each boy or girl pays for his room, board, clothes and luxuries. There is a full employment programme. School attendance for at least a half-day is compulsory and paid for in currency, the amount earned depending on grades, ability and effort. Government positions are open to all, and other workers include bankers, printers, carpenters, farmers, mechanics and cooks. There is also a graduated wage scale for this work depending on the same factors as school attendance. Thus any citizen can raise his standard of living through ability and enterprise.

The youngsters make their own laws and run their own government. They have old-fashioned town meetings, candidates "stump" (deliver political speeches) the community at election time, and their health, welfare and police departments function like those of any well-organized small township. The judge of the Citizen's Court punishes minor offenses including "vagrancy"—refusal to work—by such penalties as second-class meals (no second helpings, no desserts) no dances, no motion pictures or sports. Serious offenders are judged "socially ill" and are sentenced to the "social sanatorium" under a "social doctor" who is a trained case worker until they are "cured" and can be reinstated as free citizens.

In order to create as much of a family atmosphere as possible, the boys and girls live in small cottages presided over by

a house-mother or father. There are from 10 to 15 citizens in a cottage—and the cottages themselves are extremely attractive. Most of the furnishings for them were made by the citizens themselves in the republic's carpenter shops.

*All must work.*—All citizens must do some sort of manual labour. The boys usually do farm work or become interested in carpentry, printing or mechanics. The girls may do these things as well, but each girl must learn home-making skills. Each girl citizen must live at least six months in the Home Economics Cottage where she learns to cook, to sew, to keep a budget, to plan meals, to entertain gracefully and to take care of children. The children that the citizens care for are those of the adult staff members and the child-care programme is worked out with the co-operation of the College of Home Economics of nearby Cornell University.

William, or "Daddy" George, as he was always known to the boys and girls of Freeville, died in April, 1936, but his excellent work has been carried on by his

son-in-law, Don T. Urquhart, who heads the professional staff.

In the 50 years since the establishment of the Junior Republic, nearly 5,000 "graduates" have attended. The average length of time spent at Freeville is approximately two years. Among these graduates have been men and women who have made outstanding contributions in many fields of endeavour, and include three Hollywood "Oscar" (awarded by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences) winners, a California legislator, the head of a Dakota training school, an Episcopal rector, a well-known publisher, and several prominent lawyers.

The success of William George's experiment in giving boys and girls more freedom and responsibility and in treating them as human beings rather than hopeless problem children has brought the Junior Republic world-wide fame. Freeville has achieved near miracles in character building and rehabilitation by following the principle of letting the young people make their own laws and judge themselves.

#### A NEW PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC FOR CHILDREN IN NEW YORK CITY

A new and unusual clinic for the pre-school child (from infancy to six) was announced and formally opened on February 3rd in New York City. The Clinic, known as the Council Child Development Centre, occupies a six-story building at 227 East 59th Street.

Dr. Nathan W. Ackerman, psychiatrist and director of the Centre, emphasized that the Centre is one of the few psychiatric clinics in America where a team of specialists made up of psychiatrists, pediatricians, psychiatric social workers, psychologists, group therapists and nursery school teachers with mental hygiene training can pool their knowledge in directing the

treatment of very young children in a unified manner. The Centre also offers counselling to parents in order to bring about changes in attitude in the family and hence changes in the life situation of the children.

The Centre can accommodate 50 children in treatment at one time with 30 of that number in the therapeutic nursery. It is not equipped to treat mentally retarded children or those with organic difficulties, but rather seeks to discover, through individual and group treatment, the causes of behaviour problems in apparently normal children. Children of all community groups are admitted and fees depend upon the



financial ability of parents. The nursery school occupies three floors and is appropriately equipped for the age levels served.

The Centre is jointly supported by the New York Council of Jewish Women, the estate of Lieutenant Lester N. Hothheimer and the Jewish Board of Guardians, and

has a Board of Trustees consisting of nine members representing the three sponsoring groups. The Jewish Board of Guardians directs and supervises the professional services. The staff includes many distinguished specialists. ---*The News-letter of the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers - Journal of Psychiatric Social Work*, Vol. XVI, pp. 96-97 (Winter Issue, 1946-47).

#### SEVENTH CONVOCATION OF THE TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

The seventh convocation of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences was held on Saturday, April the 26th, 1947, when the Hon'ble Shri C. Rajagopalachari delivered the address. The Wilson College Hall where the function was conducted, owing to the disturbed conditions in Nagpada, was packed with a representative gathering of citizens.

In the absence due to ill-health of Sir Sorab Saklatvala, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Sir Homi Mody presided. He extended a warm welcome to Shri Rajagopalachari. After recalling Shri Rajagopalachari's services to the country he

said: "His visit is a token of the State's interest in our work. In the thick fog that enveloped the problems of the land his had been a singularly clear vision and he has stood by his principles." Sir Homi said that few other services offered greater scope than that of the social welfare worker and he had no doubt as to the future role of the young men and women who were passing out of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

At the close of the convocation address Sir Homi presented the Diploma in Social Service Administration to the following successful candidates:

#### CANDIDATES FOR THE DIPLOMA IN SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

##### CANDIDATES

- ABDUL KADIR, M.  
B.A., Madras University, 1945  
Ernakulam, Cochin State
- AHMED, F. M.  
B.A. (Hons.), Nagpur University, 1945  
Amraoti, Berar
- AKHTAR, A. U.  
B.A., Punjab University, 1940  
Lahore, Punjab
- ANKLESARIA, Miss R. P.  
B.A. (Hons.), Bombay University, 1945  
Bombay

##### THESES SUBJECTS

- Life and Labour of Hand-loom Weavers Organised in Industrial Co-operative Societies of Cochin State.*
- Life and Labour of Mine Workers in the Pench Valley Coal Company, Chhindwara, C. P.*
- Study of Labour Welfare Work in the Tata Iron & Steel Co., Ltd., Jamshedpur.*
- Institutional Survey of Orphanages in Bombay.*

## CANDIDATES

## THESES SUBJECTS

DEBARA, MRS. A. K. B.A., Bombay University, 1941 M.A., Bombay University, 1943 Bombay.	Mental Ability of 250 Parsi School-going Children between the Ages of Eight and Eleven Years.
JÓSE, M. T. B.A., Madras University, 1943 Chalakudi, Cochin State	Life and Labour of the Workers in the Herbert Saw Mills, Chalakudi, Cochin State.
KUTAR, MISS M. J. B.A. (Hons.), Bombay University, 1945 Navsari, Bombay.	Mental Ability of 250 Parsi School-going Children between the Ages of Four and Seven Years.
MATHEW, C. T. B.A., Madras University, 1944 Mattom, Cochin State	Study of the Welfare Activities in the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, Madras.
MATHUR, S. K. B.A., Allahabad University, 1945 Moradabad, U.P.	Life and Labour of Textile Workers in the Delhi Cloth and General Mills Co. Ltd., Delhi.
NAIR, P. K. M.A., Travancore University, 1943 Trivandrum, Travancore	Life and Labour of One Hundred Miners in the Ekra Khaus Colliery, Bansiara, Bihar.
PANAKAL, J. A. B.A., Madras University, 1945 Ernakulam, Cochin State	Study of the Migration of Cochinites at present Working in the Textile Mills of Bombay with special reference to their Conditions of Life and Work.
PILLAY, K. S. B.Sc., Bombay University, 1945 Kayamkulam, Travancore	Life and Labour of the Textile Workers of the A. D. Cotton Mills Ltd., Quilon, Travancore.
RANADE, S. N. B.A., Allahabad University, 1943 M.A., Allahabad University, 1945 Muzaffarnagar, U.P.	History and Growth of the Rural Development Work of the Government of the United Provinces.
RANDERIA, K. N. B.A. (Hons.), Bombay University, 1945 Bombay	Unemployment Problem of Parsis and the Study of Artytoys Industrial Scheme Trust.
ROCHLANI, MISS S. P. B. A., Punjab University, 1944 B. T., Punjab University, 1945 Shikarpur, Sind	Embroidery as a Gainful Occupation for Women with special reference to 120 Families in Larkana, Sind.
SATHE, H. V. B. A. (Hons.), Bombay University, 1945 Bombay	Socio-economic Survey of 150 Families of Municipal Workers residing at Kasarwadi, Bombay.

## CANDIDATES

- SEN, S. R.  
B. Sc. (Hons.), Calcutta University, 1945  
Calcutta
- SHEMBAVNEKAR, B. K.  
B. A. (Hons.), Bombay University, 1942  
Bombay
- SHROFF, B. D.  
B. Sc., Bombay University, 1944  
Bombay
- TILVE, Miss P. G.  
B. A. (Hons.), Bombay University, 1944  
B. T., Bombay University, 1945  
Belgaum, Bombay
- VYAS, Miss I. C.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1945  
Bombay
- YUSUF, K.  
B. A., Osmania University, 1943  
Hyderabad, Dn.

## THESES SUBJECTS

- A Monograph on Industrial Fatigue studied in terms of Turnover and Hours of Work at the Birla Jute Manufacturing Co., Ltd., Birlapur, Bengal.*
- Economic Survey of the Village "Shembavne" in Rajapur Taluka, Ratnagiri District, Bombay.*
- Life and Labour of the Workers in the Spinning Department of the Swadeshi Mills, Kurla, Bombay, with special reference to Health.*
- Socio-economic Survey of Workers in Kirloskar Iron Works, Kirloskarwadi, with particular reference to Diet.*
- Life and Labour of Workers in the B. B. & C. I. Railway Workshop, Parel, Bombay.*
- Life and Labour of Mill Workers in Sirpur Paper Mills Ltd., Hyderabad, Dn.*

## CERTIFICATE CANDIDATES

- FERNANDO, C. M.  
Chilaw, Ceylon
- NANJI, Miss M. A.  
Bombay
- Socio-economic Survey of the Pitipana Fishermen Community, Chilaw, Ceylon.*
- Case Work Study of the Orphans in the Khoja Habib Orphanage for Girls, Bombay.*

Mr. A. U. Akhtar and Miss P. G. Tilve are the recipients of the Sir Dorabji Tata Research Scholarships for this year.

Dr. J. M. Kumarappa, Director of the Institute, presented the following Annual Report which gives a brief review of the work of the institution for the year 1946-47.

"The work of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences during the year 1946-47 was, I regret to report, affected adversely by the disturbances in the city. Within two months of our re-opening, riots broke out in Bombay as elsewhere. As the Institute is located in Nagpada, which is a disturbed locality, students and members of the staff found it difficult to come to the Institute

regularly, especially when the city's transport services failed because of the riots. For this reason, we were obliged to close the Institute for the mid-year vacation earlier than usual. As these conditions continued for a considerably long period, the Trustees generously sanctioned the purchase of a station wagon for the safe transport of students. This facilitated greater regularity of attendance. The progress achieved, in spite of these difficult conditions, was mainly due to the spirit of our students and the devotion of our staff.

"The year's work began with a Faculty strengthened by the addition of a few new members. Dr. Mrs. Kamala Bhoota, who was expected early last year from the

United States but could not get back due to passage difficulties, finally returned to India in May, 1946. She took charge as lecturer in psychology and social statistics at the beginning of this academic year. Prof. S. C. Roy, who was formerly connected with the University of Calcutta, joined about the same time. Though totally blind from the age of eight, he relied on his other senses to acquire knowledge and skills. He has had a brilliant academic career and his appointment to the Faculty is expected to be a source of inspiration to the students whom he instructs on the problems of the handicapped.

"As reported last year, the Director was in correspondence with the State Department of the United States for bringing out visiting professors from that country. In response, Miss Mary Sweeny and Miss Lois Blakey arrived about the end of October, 1946. Miss Sweeny came at the joint invitation of the All India Women's Conference and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. She is an educationist of long experience and distinguished career, having been connected for more than twenty years with the Merrill-Palmer School, Detroit, which pioneered the movement of education for marriage and family life. While with us, Miss Sweeny conducted classes on "Family and Child Welfare".

"Miss Blakey was formerly connected with the Division of Social Service Administration of Louisville University, Kentucky. Besides having taught students and directed field work, she was engaged for several years in hospital social service departments in the United States, and in Red Cross Hospitals in Europe during the war. Her field of specialisation is medical and psychiatric social work. She has come at our invitation specially to organise training for medical social workers. In the past few months, Miss Blakey has been contacting our medical men and

studying the set-up of our hospitals. She hopes to organise, in the immediate future, a model medical social service department in one of the Bombay hospitals.

"In spite of the limited accommodation at our disposal, we admitted more students this year than in previous years in order to meet the pressing demand for trained social workers all over the country. But due to the disturbances in the city, a few of those admitted dropped out. The present Junior Class consists of 14 men and 12 women. Their geographical distribution is as follows:

Bengal	...	2
Bhavnagar	...	1
Bombay	...	8
Central India	...	1
Central Provinces	...	1
Delhi	...	1
Hyderabad	...	2
Kolhapur	...	1
Madras	...	2
Mysore	...	2
Sind	...	1
United Provinces	...	4

"The students from Hyderabad and Mysore and one from the United Provinces are receiving scholarships from their respective Governments. The Government of Bombay is giving financial aid to one of the students from the Presidency. Among the private agencies which have granted scholarships for a few of our students are the American Women's Club, the Children's Aid Society, and the J. R. D. Tata Trust.

"In August, 1946, three graduates of the Institute sailed to the United States for advanced study in applied social sciences. Of these, Mr. N. F. Kaikobad has joined the School of Applied Social Sciences, Pittsburgh University, where he is specialising in social group work and

community organisation. Miss P. H. Vakharia and Miss P. A. Dordi have joined the New York School of Social Work of Columbia University. The former is specialising in psychiatric social work and the latter in medical social work. Mrs. H. D. Bhatt, who was working as Field Work Assistant, left for England in September, 1946, where she is making a study of social services for women and children. She hopes to leave for the United States to join the Simmons College School of Social Work, Boston. We also have encouraging reports of the work done by those of our students who joined American institutions during the previous year.

"The rapid advance of nation-wide social effort demands accurate knowledge of the basic trends in current social problems. The profession of social work itself depends on research for its advance in theory and practice. Unfortunately, the field of social research has been greatly handicapped by a lack of properly trained personnel, and this deficiency has been accentuated by the increased needs of government and private organisations within recent years.

"During the year 1946-47, twenty-four research problems have been tackled as field work projects. They include surveys of factory labour, social and economic surveys of villages, agricultural and fishing communities, surveys of Indian handicrafts and small industries, industrial surveys of government and public institutions, and surveys of the development and growth of social services in important cities of India. Problems relating to women and children have been studied with reference to health, diet and physical welfare. The mental side of social problems has not been neglected. Juvenile delinquency, behaviour problems and the mental backwardness of children have received special attention.

"The Sir Dorabji Tata Scholarships for the year 1946-47 were awarded to Miss P. Marr and Mr. L. D. Deodhar. Miss Marr has completed her collection of data regarding maternity and child welfare work in the major coal fields of India. Mr. Deodhar is progressing with his socio-economic survey of labour in the sugar industry in the Bombay Presidency. Mr. P. D. Kulkarni, who was awarded a scholarship by the Bureau of Research and Publications is completing his study of textile trade unionism in the Bombay Presidency. These studies will be published in due course.

"Other research studies still awaiting publication are: *Rescue Work for Sex Delinquent Women*, by Dr. Miss G. R. Banerjee; *Life and Work of Trained Graduate Teachers in Secondary Schools in the City of Bombay*, by Mr. M. S. Gore and Miss S. F. Mehta; *Adult Education Movement in India*, by B. Chatterjee; and *Students and Social Work*, prepared by a Committee appointed by the Students' Union of the Institute. The Survey of Dharavi Village undertaken by two of our Alumni for the Rotary Club of Bombay has been published and has been well received.

"The Indian Journal of Social Work, which is devoted to the promotion of professional social work, the scientific interpretation of social problems and the advancement of social research continues to grow in popularity and service. As in previous years, members of the Faculty have contributed both general and specific articles to the Journal. Continued improvement depends to a considerable extent on the constructive criticism of our subscribers. We have been able to maintain an output of special-interest publications through the device of reprinting articles or groups of articles from the Journal.

"Increase in library resources is one of the most distinctive aspects of the development of our Institute. During the years of its existence, the library has been able to accumulate a very valuable and comprehensive collection of books and other reading material pertaining to social work and related fields. During the year under report, about 500 volumes were added to the library, of which a hundred were the gift of the American Library Association. A considerable number of enquiries originating in different provinces and states is answered by the library staff. With the increase of resources and services, the library furnishes the basis for instruction and research.

"The Child Guidance Clinic of the Institute was established in recognition of the fact that childhood is the most formative and precious period of life. Even though the disturbances in the city hampered the work, our Child Guidance Clinic has striven to serve children. Children with behaviour difficulties are referred to the Clinic by schools and hospitals in the city and by other institutions serving children. In addition to its direct service to children and their families, the Clinic has held classes in child psychiatry for students working for the post-graduate diploma in pediatrics. The success of a Clinic depends on the development of other social agencies which recognise the fundamental needs and rights of the child. Our Clinic feels the need of schools, which place emphasis on the personality development of the pupils through supervised recreation and a variety of creative activities leading to vocational skills.

"The Institute considers field work as an integral part of training for social work. Therefore, though there has been considerable difficulty in securing suitable forms of field work centres for our students,

facilities were provided to enable them to obtain an understanding of social conditions, and to gain experience in the various forms of social administration. During the year under report, we undertook training in field work only in such centres as the Nagpada Neighbourhood House, the Community Centres of the Zoroastrian Welfare Association, the Labour Welfare Centres of the Government of Bombay, the Khatau Makanjee Spinning and Weaving Company Ltd., and the Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Home for Children of the Society for the protection of Children in Western India, where our field work assistants could directly supervise the students at work. In order to enable students to have as intimate a knowledge as possible of working class conditions, opportunities for meeting factory workers and their families and discussing with them their problems were provided by the field work department.

"An item of special interest arising out of the recently prepared expansion scheme for the Institute is the extension of the period of training from two to two and a half years. In the light of past experience, it was found that the two-year period was insufficient to provide theoretical instruction and adequate practical training in the different fields of social work. The decision to extend the period of training was recently taken by the Governing Board on the recommendation of the Faculty. The educational programme, under the new scheme, will be planned so as to offer sound orientation in the broad aspects of social work and to develop professional competence in the field of specialisation. The fields of specialisation we propose to develop immediately are: Industrial Relations and Personnel Management, Medical and Psychiatric Social Work, and Family and Child Wel-

fare. In view of the growing need for active co-operation between labour and capital, it has become necessary to provide suitable training for those entering this field. As for medical and psychiatric social work, it may be mentioned that the Bhorc Health Survey and Development Committee has specially pointed out the value of such services for all hospitals. Now that we have a specialist, Miss Blakey, with us we hope to put this item of expansion soon into operation.

"This expansion in the programme of work makes it necessary not only to increase our staff but also to provide more accommodation. Mention was made in the previous report that three acres of land had been bought for putting up buildings for the Institute. I am glad to report that the land has now been released by the military who were occupying it and that construction will soon begin.

"As India is awakening to the need for organised welfare work on a scientific basis, there is a growing demand for the employment of students trained at the Institute as professional social workers. Many of them have filled important posts as welfare work organisers in various provinces. They are employed as labour and welfare officers, rehabilitation officers, case

workers, probation officers, social workers in institutions for defective children, welfare workers for municipalities and government agencies, and research workers and investigators for charity trusts. The Institute has not only the opportunity but also the obligation to assist public and private social welfare agencies in every possible way in meeting the new demands of the nation. It must be concerned above all, during the trying times ahead, with the quality of personnel for social services and of insuring the highest standards of administration in all social welfare programmes.

"In conclusion I should like to take this opportunity to thank the Cultural Division of the State Department of the United States for their interest in securing the services of Miss Mary Sweeny and Miss Lois Blakey and the American Library Association for their valuable contribution of books on applied social sciences. I should also like to express our gratitude to the authorities who have co-operated with us in providing field work centres for our students. My thanks are also due to the Trustees and the members of the Governing Board for their never failing interest in all matters concerning the progress of the Institute."

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<b>RESERVES</b>	...	...	<b>"</b>	<b>23,85,000</b>
<b>TOTAL DEPOSITS</b>	...	...	<b>"</b>	<b>6,37,00,000</b>
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## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Social Function of Science.* By J. D. Bernal. London : George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., Pp. 482.

"For those who have once seen it, the frustration of science is a very bitter thing. It shows itself as disease, enforced stupidity, misery, thankless toil, and premature death for the great majority, and an anxious, grasping, and futile life for the remainder. Science can change all this, but only science working with those social forces which understand its functions and which march to the same ends."

That is at once the analysis, the hope and the warning that this book of Professor Bernal has to give to its readers. Rarely has a book been written with such an insight and such thoroughness. Starting with a historical background of the development of science, and showing incidentally the futility of such arguments as 'science for science' sake, the author goes on to give a very detailed account of the methods by which science is organised in education, research and industry. He brings out the defects in these methods and the enormous waste of material and human resources that they imply. He points out that these defects in the technique and method of organising sciences are closely linked up with the particular type of economy that prevails in most of the countries of Western Europe and America; and then concludes that the first part of his book by saying that any change in the present methods is not likely to be effective unless it is at the same time accompanied by similar changes in the social and economic fields of life.

In the second part he applies himself to the task of showing how scientific work could be better organised both in

the field of education and in that of its application to the service of human needs. This leads him on to some of the best aspects of his study—the consideration of the close relation between science and society and the social function of science.

No mere outline of the author's plan can do justice to the comprehensiveness of his treatment. To the student of social sciences, however, the portion of the book that is of the greatest interest is the one dealing specifically with the interdependence and interrelation between the organisation pattern of society and science. In this the book is representative of a school of thought which has realised the futility of trying to treat life's problems individually. Life is one well-knit whole and no one of its departments can be studied with thoroughness without understanding its place in relation to the rest.

Born of this realization is the craving of our best thinkers to find a new harmony between our fast developing scientific techniques and our unorientated social-psychological frames of reference. While our techniques are compelling us to think in terms of the group, our ethical attitude to life is yet largely individualistic. The fact is that individual freedom with our political and economic system only means the freedom of the rich to grow richer at the expense of the poor. The fascistic and imperialistic wars of the last half a century, the utter misery and starvation of more than half of the world's population in the midst of sufficiency, the inability of



our civilization, to give adequate aid to the suffering in spite of a highly developed medical and surgical science—are in the last analysis a reflection of this basic contradiction between the demands of our scientific techniques and our social philosophy.

“The present chaos and decadence of economic, social and intellectual life” have given rise to an attitude of reticence in literary and scientific circles toward the possibility of a new life and a better life under a civilization ruled by science. But, says Professor Bernal, the cause of this decadence lies not in the progress of science but in the failure of the politico-economic organization of society to adapt itself to new demands.

What happens to individual freedom if and when this adaptation is made? Professor Bernal answers the question in an illuminating analysis of the idea of freedom. “The freedom of the nineteenth century was a seeming thing. It was an absence of a knowledge of necessity. Its basis lay in social relations through a market. In liberal theory every man should be free to do what he liked with his own,

buy or sell, work or idle. In fact he was tied by the iron laws of economics: laws socially produced but taken as laws of nature because they were not understood. In an integrated and conscious society this conception of freedom is bound to be replaced by another—*freedom as the understanding of necessity.*”

Professor Bernal does not put the question whether this transformation of society is possible. But he answers it by saying that those who doubt the possibility only show lack of faith in humanity. They do not “appreciate the significance of the apparently hopeless yet undying struggle which is being waged against that system”. The new world is not something imposed on humanity from without. It will be made by men, and the men who make it and those who follow them will know what to do with it. The freedom and achievement which comes from action based on understanding is always growing though never complete. A Utopia is not a happy ecstatic state but the basis for further struggles and further conquests.”

M. S. G.

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*Children's Centres.* Edited by R. H. Alschuler. New York: Morrow and Co., 1942. Pp. 168 (Issued by the National Commission for Young Children).

This book, written in response to the war needs of America, is an outstanding work of practical value on nursery and child education. During the war, the army took the fathers away from their families and many a mother entered war industries at home. The education and care of their children largely became the task of the Children's Centres or the nursery schools which sprang up all over the country to meet the war demand.

The public interest in child education also grew keener. It was at this time that *Children's Centres* was published for the guidance of those participating in the establishment of the nursery schools and for those who love children.

The authors, who are the world's authorities on child education, point out that the nursery school (for children of 2, 3, and 4 years of age) requires a different approach from the one prevalent in

ordinary schools. In the ordinary school, the emphasis is on the acquisition of facts and academic skills. On the contrary, the entire set-up in the nursery school—the buildings, play-grounds, etc.—are designed to meet the children's needs for active play and for eating and sleeping. The daily planning includes such routines as washing, dressing, undressing, toileting, eating; rest periods, and afternoon naps. The nursery school is equipped with a wide variety of play materials, such as blocks, books, easels, crayons, doll-play materials, sand-boxes, trains, and climbing apparatus. These play-things are so placed that they are easily accessible. Children follow their own interest, so long as they do not disturb others.

Commenting on the role of the teacher, the authors emphasize that teaching in the nursery schools should be done by those who have been trained in the knowledge and technique of child care. The teacher's job is to create interesting opportunities for the children to experiment with the play materials (blocks, clay, paints, books, etc.). She refrains from dominating or interfering with the children's activity as far as possible. "Children learn best when they are not taught"; therefore, they should be allowed to play for long stretches of time

without interference or direction from an adult.

The book gives detailed suggestions for securing the co-operation of the neighbourhood or the town where the children's centre is to be established. There should be a planning committee of professional persons and one or two lay leaders all of whom have interest in children and are familiar with their needs. Careful planning should be done so as to investigate and utilize all available services for children. A number of sub-committees are suggested for the purpose.

The rest of the book contains the most authoritative information on the needs of young children and the role of the nursery school in meeting those needs so as to contribute to the growth of the children. Every important aspect of the nursery school, such as play, daily schedule, staff, records, equipment, housing, etc., is discussed in detail. The book includes approved plans for a children's centre, many illustrative photographs, scale of drawings, instructions for building equipment and play materials, and an annotated bibliography—all of which enhance its value as a practical manual on nursery school.

K. B.

*Deafness and the Deaf in the United States.* By Harry Best. New York : Macmillan Co., 1943. Pp. 675.

Dr. Harry Best, Professor of Sociology at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, U. S. A., is a most illustrious and a highly esteemed person in the realm of work for the handicapped in America. His knowledge, sympathy, interest and energy are by no means confined to the work for and the studies about the deaf, with whom the book under review deals, but

he, with his capacious heart and versatile talent, is a worker for the handicapped in the truest sense of the term—with an extremely delicate sensitivity to the call of every type of suffering and deprivation. This is amply evidenced by his two monumental works, viz.—*Blindness and the Blind in the United States*, and *Crime and the Criminal Law in the United*

States, and by his numerous articles on the various classes of the physically, mentally and socially handicapped people.

It may be observed here that a personal factor of the author has added immensely to the intrinsic value and interest of the book under discussion. He himself is the victim of an acute auditory deficiency and has to resort to hearing aids for the purpose of following the conversations of others. But it seems that this hypacusia has, as it or some other physical handicap has done in several other instances, urged him on to greater and greater achievements instead of it becoming much of a drawback or a damper.

The present book has succeeded in occupying a conspicuous place in the world literature on deafness, just as its sister volume on blindness, referred to in a foregoing paragraph, has been an outstanding contribution to the ever-growing knowledge about the visually handicapped. Although the volume is chiefly interested in the dissemination of information about the hypacusic in the United States, yet it contains countless principles and suggestions which are of universal application. This may be noticed from the titles of the five parts under which the book has been divided, viz., "Deafness and Possibilities of its Prevention," "General Conditions of Deaf," "Organizations in respect to Deaf," "Provisions for Education of Deaf Children," and

"Conclusions with respect to Work for Deaf."

These five parts have been distributed under 38 chapters, each of which is replete with an immensity of facts and figures. A few of the most fascinating chapters are listed here: "Deafness and Heredity," "Physical and Mental Conditions of Deaf," "Martial Conditions of Deaf," and "Popular Conceptions regarding Deaf."

The statistically-minded readers will find the book to be of unparalleled attraction because of its vast wealth of tables and charts scattered throughout its pages from the start to finish. Besides, there are twelve valuable appendices which have supplied important statistics about the varied problems confronting the acoustically handicapped, and certain vivid representations, such as, the manual method, visible speech, etc. The index has been prepared with great care and dexterity.

It is a great pity that this book has not yet been accorded the recognition it deserves by the workers for the deaf in India. It is recommended that a volume on the hypacusic in this country be prepared on the model of Dr. Best's immortal contribution. This will surely give a strong impetus to the ameliorative programmes on behalf of the Indian deaf and the hard-of-hearing whose number runs into millions.

S. C. R.

# THE HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTION

BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

In the following article, the author deals with one of our most important problems whose superficial solution has been found in the partition of the country. He contends that its roots lie deeper and also related to economic and social conditions. For an abiding solution, he pleads earnestly that the nation should adopt measures to revolutionise its economic and social outlook and practice.

Dr. Kumarappa has worked in close association with Mahatma Gandhi as Assistant Secretary of the All India Village Industries Association at Wardha, and is at present engaged in literary work.

Perhaps the most striking phenomenon in India during the last two or three years has been the ever increasing tension between Hindus and Muslims. The feeling of suspicion, distrust and hatred between them has never been so intense or so widespread as it has lately become. The stabbings during the last twelve months have added fuel to the fire and set ablaze the passions of one community against the other. Now the two remain at daggers drawn and regard themselves as belonging to separate nationalities. A phenomenon so disastrous for the united life of the nation requires to be diligently studied and analysed. What are its causes? It is necessary to know them, for so long as they remain unidentified they are apt to work underground and lead to sudden upheavals in unexpected directions. Moreover, only when we know them can we adequately cope with the situation and find an abiding solution.

## A. The Problem

Rightly has the Hindu-Muslim question been regarded as a triangle. It is three-sided. On the one side are the British, and on the other two sides the two communities. Without one or other of them the problem in its present form will not have arisen.

1. *The British.*—When the British came to India there existed in this country a highly evolved social and economic order. The centre of it was the village. The work of the village was distributed among the various castes and communities. It was an arrangement which

aimed at averting conflict and economic instability, and promoting unity and co-operation. All the castes and communities were dependent on each other. The farmer could not do without the weaver, the carpenter, the doctor and the priest; and these in their turn needed him for their food. They were like the parts of an organism, each vital for the other and incapable of surviving apart from the other. The head cannot say to the leg, "I do not need you;" nor can the leg hope to live apart from the head. So closely were they intertwined.

Not only were all the castes and communities thus tied up with each other in a bond of organic unity through the village, but also each caste was a closely knit unit which looked after all its members. Accordingly, in the place of jealousy and rivalry between people pursuing the same occupation, the caste instituted fellow feeling, brotherliness and co-operation among them.

Or take a still smaller group, the joint family. It secured that the individual was trained in controlling his desires in the interests of others, in protecting the weak and the helpless, and in performing his duty to others rather than on insistence on his rights as an individual. It thus prepared him from childhood in group living.

The life of the nation was founded on these three institutions—the joint family, the caste and the village. Not that there was no reaching out of the village to the district, the province and the country as a

whole. But for all practical purposes the average individual was controlled primarily by these three institutions, and he had very little to do with what went beyond them. He had personal knowledge of all the people of the village, and whatever his caste or community he felt obligation and kinship to them as though he and they were members of a large joint family. His life was not his own to do with it as he pleased, but was at every turn linked up with others of his group or village.

Such was the close unity and corporateness that had been carefully fostered in the everyday life of the average man in India. But the British understood nothing of the philosophy underlying our social structure. They were interested only in loot and their own safety. So they mercilessly cut right across these institutions, centralized the Government and linked up the individual directly with it. In their eagerness to raise as much land revenue as possible, they introduced the system of dealing with the cultivator himself for revenue rather than as formerly with the village community as a whole. Out of fear of leaving too much power in the hands of the people they took over the judicial and administrative functions formerly carried on by the Panchayat or elected village executive committee. The result was that corporate life in the village came to an end, and the individual was cut adrift.

This tendency to destroy the cords that bound individuals and communities together, and to set village life on the path of disintegration, became strengthened by the new economic forces put into operation by Britain. Under the old corporate economy all the essential requirements of the village were produced locally. Crops were grown to meet the needs of the village. As against this, the British in their own interests introduced

the system of growing crops for export—cotton, jute, groundnut, tobacco and what not. The cultivator thus lost all sense of obligation to his village and thought only of his own profit. He did not grow enough food for the village. The result is that we are today in a perpetual state of famine, and are begging other parts of the world for food. Similarly in regard to industries. Formerly, the village artisans manufactured all that was needed by his neighbours. Today those needs are met by factory goods imported from outside. So the village neither requires his services nor feels any obligation to him. His place in the village economy is gone, and he is let loose to fend for himself. His caste cannot help him, for it has stopped functioning as an occupational guild, anybody of any caste doing whatever work comes his way. Under the economic strain, the joint family too is breaking up. An individual cannot afford to support even himself, leave alone the question of looking after the many members of a joint family. He drifts to a city seeking employment. No one there bothers about him. He lives in isolation. Life is for him a grim struggle for existence where each man cares only for himself leaving the devil to take the hindmost.

What an anti-climax to the sense of mutual obligation which India had so carefully nurtured through the ages! Britain in one stroke tore to pieces the work of centuries and let loose on the country the jungle law of individualism. Everyone was free to rise if he could by climbing over the shoulders of his neighbour. Honour and wealth were to him who succeeded, whether by fair means or by foul.

If the individual was in this manner bereft of all social obligations and plunged in competition and strife with his neighbour, the same happened also between

communities. Till now the economic bond of village self-sufficiency kept them united. But when this snapped, each community was free to seek its own salvation. This was made worse by the fact that with foreign goods pouring into the Indian market, the village could not keep the communities adequately employed. The Government was not interested in industrialising the country, for then Britain might lose her trade in India. So the educated of all communities had no avenues of employment except in Government service. There was, therefore, an unseemly scramble for jobs and offices. The Government with an air of even-handed justice stepped in to distribute them among the communities and deliberately followed a policy of encouraging one as over against another, to divide the people and thus rule over them. Thus sprang up rivalry and jealousy between Hindus and Muslims. The conflict was at bottom economic, the two communities being anxious to get for themselves what they could from the limited stock of loaves and fishes that remained to be distributed. It was confined till recently to cities. But to carry weight it is now being carried to the masses in the villages, and poisonous propaganda is spreading even there setting one community against another.

Nor is this all. In her dealings with the two communities, Britain followed a policy of balance of power. When Muslims wished to regain the Moghul throne and threatened her supremacy she befriended the Hindus. When the Hindus through education and wealth became powerful and organised resistance to her rule she made allies with the Muslims. Fearing a united national uprising against herself, she instigated Muslims to demand separate electorates. The seed of separation thus sown could not but bear fruit. It has done

so today, in the form of Muslims separating themselves from the rest of the nation and carving out Pakistan as a state entirely independent of India.

The British then contributed much to the Hindu-Muslim problem. They broke up the ancient, social and economic organisations in the villages and thus cut at the root of corporate life. They set up in its place a crude commercial individualism, where the individual thought only of his own gain, no matter what loss he brought to others. They encouraged one community to profit at the cost of the other and provoked communal jealousy and strife in order thus to prevent both from unitedly rising against them. They put into operation divisive forces by introducing communal electorates.

That the British should have sought thus to break up the nation into warring factions is understandable, but that we should have fallen ready victims to their device suggests that all was not well with us. When they came to the country we were politically in a state of national disintegration and chaos. The Moghul power had collapsed and there was nothing to take its place. Petty chiefs vied with each other to seize what they could for themselves and gain supremacy. Blinded by their selfishness and greed they trusted the British to help them, one against the other. Britain saw her opportunity and seized it. By intrigue and cunning she set one chief against another, gradually installed herself in power, and established her rule. This was possible only because, at that time, the various parts of the country lived in isolation and regarded each other with indifference, if not with hostility. It was a serious flaw in our political life, and Britain fully exploited it.

2. *The Muslims.*—When the Muslims first invaded India, they were undoubtedly

foreigners with a culture very different from that of the Hindus. But they were only a handful. Soon, however, they made many converts, often forcibly, so that the vast majority of those who later came to regard themselves as Muslims were not foreigners at all but as much children of the soil as the Hindus. They, therefore, lived in peace and amity for centuries with the rest of the population. They formed an integral part of the village community and contributed their share of work to meet the economic needs of the village. They lived side by side with Hindus both in towns and villages. There was fellow feeling and mutual aid between them. Hindus did not resent being ruled by a Muslim, or Muslims by a Hindu. This is true even today in the villages, say for example in Hyderabad with a Muslim Nizam and a vast Hindu population, or in Kashmir with a Hindu Raja and a Muslim population. Hindus served as Prime Ministers and Commanders of Armies in Muslim States, and Muslims in Hindu States. Not that there was never any feud between the communities. There was from time to time, but in an unorganised and spasmodic manner. Only when there were ambitious rulers or chieftains greedy of power, was there any military uprising on the part of a Hindu Raja to overthrow Muslim rule, or of a Muslim ruler to overpower a Hindu Raja, and even then it was a matter between the rulers and their armies. The people had little or no part.

But today all this has altered. Communal hatred and strife have penetrated to the villages. Hindus have been stabbed in the Muslim villages of East Bengal, and Muslims in the Hindu villages of Bihar. It is no more a matter of princes and armies, but of the people themselves. There is no doubt that so far as the present situation goes it is purely of political origin. The chief responsibility for it must

be laid at the door of the Muslim League. The Congress was concerned with fighting the British. It knew that starting a communal wrangle at this time was suicidal to the cause of independence, for it would distract attention, even as the British wanted, from freedom's battle to a domestic matter which could be settled later. The Congress, therefore, had everything to gain by averting a communal clash. But the League would not have it so. It plunged in direct action to press its claims for Pakistan, and thus lit the match which started the fire.

There is no doubt that for this the one person to blame was Mr. Jinnah. The Muslim League merely followed his lead. But the fact that Mr. Jinnah was able to get the backing of the majority of the Muslim population shows that the religious appeal caught their imagination. For them nothing mattered—neither political freedom nor reverence for human life—so much as religion. "Islam in danger" was a slogan they could not resist. They were brought up on the belief that they must give up their all, including their lives, for their religion. Most of them were not educated enough to ask what Islam essentially was. Their leaders said that in a united India Islam will be suppressed by the Hindu majority, and that was enough.

But if this was true of the people, what, it may be asked, of the leaders? What made them carry on a bloody crusade for the establishment of Pakistan? It is notorious that as a rule political leaders are unscrupulous, whether they be Muslim, Hindu or British. Most of them have their own private ambitions. To put it crudely, they want power. The Muslim politician feels that, if the Muslims are merged with the Hindus in a united India, he will be nowhere. If he is to wield power a separate homeland must be established, where he can be supreme. Once this idea is

born, arguments many and long can be found justifying the claim on moral grounds. In politics of today, for the basest of motives the sublimest of reasons are given. So the Muslim League showed righteous indignation that 100,000,000 Muslims were being denied a homeland; it proclaimed that Congress rule meant Muslim subjection and slavery, and that Muslim prosperity and progress cannot be achieved in a Hindu dominated united India. And who would not fight for a homeland, for freedom and for economic advancement? These claims had to be supported by stories of injustice and persecution of Muslims under Congress rule. Possibly the Congress, when in power, did not act above board. It is after all not a perfect organisation composed of men with absolutely pure motives. Far from it. The Muslims may, therefore, have had just grievances against the Hindu administrators. Other minority communities may also have felt that under Congress regime their legitimate demands were ignored. But that surely does not justify these communities seeking to separate themselves bodily from the rest of the nation. It is as statesman and officials gain experience in administration that they learn to be impartial and free from bias. After all the Congress had been in power only for five years and for the first time, and had to work under grave restrictions. Besides, in democratic organisations, there are various ways in which the grievances of the people can be made public and remedies effected. That the Muslim League should have resorted on this ground to the extreme measure of demanding a separate state for Muslims suggests that at bottom it had other reasons than the one merely of Congress misrule. As already said, the more weighty reason appears to have been the ambition of Muslim power-seekers.

Moreover, the Muslims of India forget that racially the majority of them are one with the Hindus, and have no blood kinship whatsoever with the Arab and Moghul invaders. It is absurd for them to claim racial affinity with these outsiders and to slay their own kinsmen under this fond delusion; still more absurd to seek to establish the rule of such over as much of our country as possible. So far as the outsider goes, he is not interested in establishing Muslim rule in his own country, much less elsewhere, and looks rightly with disdain on his coreligionists in India aspiring for the establishment of a Muslim state, stretching from the Mediterranean to the Pacific. When religion assumes political power it becomes a menace and a danger to the nations, as is so amply proved by medieval history. Evidently, the Muslims elsewhere are enlightened enough to realise this. Not so, unfortunately, our Muslim masses. Their ignorance and superstition have enabled the Muslim political opportunist, aided and abetted by the British imperialist, to exploit the situation for their own purposes.

3. *The Hindus.* -We are so apt to throw the blame for the rapid deterioration in relationship between Hindus and Muslims on the British imperialist and on Mr. Jinnah and his Muslim League, that it is well for us to ask if Hindus also are not responsible for the ill will which exists between the two communities. We are used to thinking of Hinduism as preaching tolerance of all religions. Besides, history tells us that in the past India had the genius of assimilating the several tribes and races which poured into the country from the Northwest and made them so much a part of herself that they are now not any more distinguishable as a foreign or heterogeneous element. We are not, therefore, able to understand why Hinduism has failed miserably.



rably in its dealings with the Muslims today. What has happened to the Hindu genius for assimilation and synthesis ? This is the question we have to face, and let us face it squarely, without fear or favour.

To find an adequate answer, we must go back in history to the heyday of our culture when India was at her best, and succeeded in assimilating alien elements. We must compare her methods then with the attitude she later developed in regard to them. That will itself suggest to us why India's genius for assimilation and reconciliation appears to have left her, and how it may be restored to her.

When the Aryans first came into India, they were a handful compared with the vast bulk of the population whom they found settled in the country. They immediately identified themselves with the inhabitants and became so one with them through marriage and adoption of their religion, folklore and customs that it is today difficult to say which is Aryan and which non-Aryan in Hindu religion and culture. The local deities were given an honoured place in the hierarchy of Aryan gods, and, what is more, were completely identified with them. Their names were freely interchanged and stories connected with one were related also of the other. Fusion could not be more complete. It led to tremendous growth and development in religion and philosophy and the ideas born then through this fusion still remain with us. At this time there was no caste and no elaborate ritual or priestcraft. Life was simple, and people mixed with each other without any feeling of superiority or inferiority. The philosophy of this period is represented by the Upanishads which preach a broad Universalism—all is one without distinction. Brahman, the ultimate Reality, is not only in the priest, but also in the Chandala, the outcaste,

the dog and inanimate nature. All are, therefore, sacred, and, nothing is to be excluded as despicable and unworthy. This was the mainspring of India's genius for tolerance and assimilation. If only this had been kept in mind by the nation through its long history, India would have been the greatest force for peace and reconciliation in the world.

Unfortunately what happened was that this sublime Universalism and tolerance gave place to narrow sectarianism and intolerance. Caste which was originally only an occupational guild, with no idea of exclusiveness or determination by birth, began to become rigid allowing little or no intermingling. The priest who, as the spiritual head of the community, should have been the first to arrest this downward process, became himself a party to it, if he was not directly responsible for it. He upheld with all the status that his professional access to the Deity gave him, the most complicated system of restrictions and prohibitions. He raised a wall of exclusiveness round himself, probably at first merely to keep his *mantras* and rites a trade secret, so that others may not compete with him in his occupation and deprive him of his easily earned income. But this set the ball rolling. Each occupational group did likewise, excluding itself from the rest. Entrance to it was soon entirely closed. So only those born within the caste could belong to it. The groups thus became watertight having no part or lot with each other. Exclusiveness is impossible without pride. Pride developed into arrogance such as the world has never seen, with the priest heading a hierarchy of superior and inferior castes, each following its own rules and customs, and looking down with contempt on those below it. At the bottom of this ladder was the outcaste whose very shadow was

believed to pollute the higher castes. Could human conceit go further? The philosophy of the Upanishads taught that all were Brahman with no difference. The social system which developed in the course of time recognized innumerable distinctions which could never be bridged in this life, and which had strictly to be observed.

Thus was Hindu society when the Muslims came to the country. Far from being receptive and tolerant, the Hindu had no room in his fold for the Muslim *mlecha*. No doubt the Muslims also made themselves disagreeable at first by running roughshod over Hindu susceptibilities. But it speaks well for the corporate village economy and social organisation, to which we have already referred, that in spite of this, in the course of time when they settled down to a peaceful life, there was mutual exchange of ideas and general friendship between them. They lived together in villages, worked together on fields and in arts and crafts, and joined in the celebration of each other's festivals. This natural give and take continued through the centuries to the benefit of both the communities.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to note that the Muslim remained outside the pale of Hinduism, distinct and unassimilable. Perhaps, the reason for this was partly the nature of the Muslim religion which would not allow it to be easily assimilated. But surely it was also due to Hindu bankruptcy. If Hinduism had still its genius for assimilation it should have been able to win the Muslim, however fanatic, into its fold, and to regard Mohamed as one of its *avatars*. But it failed. Why? Owing, it would appear, to the stranglehold of caste. To assimilate, you must be receptive, open, eager to learn, humble; capable of identifying yourself with the joys and sorrows, the ideals and aspirations of others. Caste

had inculcated in people the opposite of these virtues. To come to our own day, and to illustrate in terms of our own experience, what intermingling can there be between an orthodox Brahmin and a cultured Muslim? The Brahmin, however poor and ignorant, will not let a Muslim, however rich or learned, enter his house or eat with him. If he is hungry or thirsty he will rather die than take food or drink from the Muslim. What self-respecting individual can stand this superior, holier-than-thou attitude? The Muslims in themselves are democratic in outlook. If they react today by refusing to take water from a Hindu, is it not because the Hindus have wounded their self-respect by refusing to take water from them? If South African whites will not admit Indians in their hotels, the Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay reacts by refusing to shelter South African whites. But whose is the fault? Pride and intolerance in one are responsible for pride and intolerance in the other. If the Muslim today will have nothing to do with the Hindu, is it not partly because the Hindu with all his caste taboos and prohibitions shuts himself off in self-complacent pride from the Muslim? The Muslim demand for a sovereign state completely cut off from Hindudom seems thus to be but the reflection in the political sphere of the ostracism which the Muslim has suffered lately at the hands of the Hindu in the domestic and social spheres. The Hindu pulls his wrappings round him close lest he be contaminated by contact with a Muslim. Result, the Muslim wants Pakistan or a holy land which will not be polluted by the tread of a Hindu. Logical? Yes, indeed, cruelly so.

It is easy to dismiss the force of this logic by regarding the cry of Pakistan as a purely political stunt, and to say that

after all in villages the people live together peacefully without ever a thought about Pakistan, and that even if Hindus are exclusive the Muslims are now used to it and do not mind it. But in such exclusiveness is the seed of discontent and disruption which the political opportunist can use for his own ends. So long as the seed remains, the plant can be grown with a little nurturing. This is what has happened in the case of the Muslims as over against the Hindus, and to a lesser extent in the case of the 'untouchables' versus the 'touchables,' the non-Brahmins versus the Brahmins, the Dravidians versus the Aryans. The spirit of exclusiveness which caste has engendered is being exploited to break up the country into fragments, at a time when the rest of the world is finding wisdom in union and amalgamation. We the children of our ancestors have become their worst foes breaking to pieces what they so arduously built up.

### B. The Solution

If our analysis of the factors that have led to the Hindu-Muslim problem is correct, the solution is not far to seek. It would mean that the contributing causes must be removed. Some people assert that since Britain which is the major party responsible for our fighting amongst ourselves is soon to disappear from India, the Hindu-Muslim problem will solve itself automatically. The British withdrawal may of course in itself be a powerful factor for good, as there will then be an end to their hidden influence and machinations to keep the people disunited. So only the other day a party leader addressing a public meeting in Bombay said, "Let the British leave India today, and tomorrow you will find that there are no more communal riots, and Hindus and Muslims will regard each other as brothers." This, however, is an extreme view to which not

every student of public affairs in this country will subscribe. Gandhiji may be nearer the truth when he suspects that British withdrawal may lead to chaos and anarchy. The poison of discord injected into the body politic of India by Britain has gone too deep for it to evaporate the moment the British quit. It will have to be carefully purged out of the system. What steps we shall have to take to do this and to achieve communal unity appears from our treatment above. We may enumerate them in the order we have followed hitherto.

1. *The British.*—(a) The self-sufficient village economy which the British destroyed must be revived, and employment and prosperity brought back to the people. It cannot be that we can call back in every detail what existed of old. Nor is that necessary. What we need to do is to restore in principle the self-dependent village community which will distribute its work and its resources among all its members, whatever their caste or creed, and administer its affairs through its own elected Panchayats. We need not have caste with its gradations of superiority and inferiority. We shall have to have in its place occupational co-operatives consisting of all communities engaged in the occupation. The whole aim should be to substitute in the place of the cut-throat competitive economy introduced by Britain the corporate economy of our villages. We should restore to the villages the central place which they occupied in our national life. For dealing with matters which arise in relation to neighbouring villages, provinces, the country and the rest of the world, there may of course be district, provincial and national administrations; but they will have to be elected and controlled by the villages. This will be Panchayat Raj such as Gandhiji suggests as the only

salvation for our ills, whether political, social or economic.

(b) Separate electorates should be abolished forthwith. Seats may be reserved for various communities, but members should be elected to them by all communities jointly.

(c) To the proper functioning of such a system should be harnessed a new type of education which will fit the child for co-operative work and group life. Our education till now has been one which at its best merely sharpened the intellect. Hereafter it must pay attention also to the training of the hand for work, and of the heart for co-operating and living in harmony with one's neighbours. The temptation in self-sufficient village groups will be for the villages to confine themselves to their own little circles and to pursue their own welfare regardless of what happens to other groups. This is a very real danger, and, unless it is deliberately averted, it will result in splitting up the country into mutually exclusive elements. It is precisely such lack of feeling of kinship with those outside one's own territorial group, that made one state combine with the British against another, as we have already pointed out, and brought the whole country under foreign rule. It should, therefore, be the responsibility of those engaged in education, through the teaching of geography, history, literature, song, art and religion, and through lectures, travel if possible, and organisation of relief to areas in distress, to instil into the minds of both young and old alike, love of country, and a feeling of cultural unity with people in the rest of the land whatever their language, caste or creed. The United States of America has been able, by an intensive process of education, to absorb the diverse nationalities who migrate there, and to make of them full-fledged Americans. Our aim

should also be to plan education of children and adults in such a way as to bring about a strong sense of national unity and real fellow feeling between all the communities and linguistic groups of this vast land.

2. *The Muslims.*—(d) It cannot be that if Muslim power-seekers are exploiting the religious susceptibilities and ignorance of the Muslim masses for their own selfish ends, such exploitation can go on for ever. Education will open the eyes of the people, and they will soon rise in revolt against their leaders. Truth cannot be always hid, and with the rapid awakening of the masses all over the world the Muslim masses of our country may also be expected to see that their happiness and advancement does not lie in cutting themselves adrift from their neighbours, but in joining with them in every way possible. Further, they had remained united through all these years, and, therefore, can easily understand that they have more to gain than to lose by reunion. Centuries of living together in peace and amity, and influencing each other in language, food, clothes, religion, music, literature, architecture, and arts and crafts, cannot be wiped off by momentary ill will and strife artificially brought about by interested parties. Moreover, a religion that results in hating one's fellowman and putting him to death is opposed in principle to Islam, the religion of peace. Ultimately, therefore, these factors may tell and may induce the Muslim, who seems today to be recalcitrant and unyielding, to come round and join hands with the rest of his countrymen, to work for the welfare of our common motherland.

3. *The Hindus.*—(e) The Hindus must certainly give up the spirit of exclusiveness and pride engendered by caste. We must, as Gandhiji has untiringly told us, recognise no distinction between man

and man, for do they not all embody the same Brahman ? We cannot cling to caste and yet clamour for the unity of India. The days of talking, theorizing, and shouting slogans are over. It is actions that count. Do we believe in the unity of India ? Then we must work for it. We cannot get it by merely crying ourselves hoarse against partition, or by putting all the blame on the British or the Muslims. We must so organize the domestic social, and religious life of the Hindus that the present dominant Hindu characteristic of aloofness and pride may give place to love of man as man, irrespective of all distinctions of birth or

creed. We shall have to revolutionize Hindu canons of conduct and bring them in line with the Universalism of the Upanishads. Are we prepared to exert ourselves to this extent and to pay the price ? Only then will true unity and brotherhood prevail in this land.

Unless we act and act immediately along these lines, we shall not be able to get rid of the disease which is eating into the core of our national life. It depends on ourselves whether we allow the contagion to spread or arrest it at the start, and adopt remedial measures to restore the nation to its former wholeness and health.

# MARITAL FRICTIONS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

MRS. I. D. KOTWAL

Modern scientific contributions have been more or less successful in providing a clearer conception of the factors embracing marital problems. The following article is a lively description of the steps leading to more stable marriage relationships. The writer, whose ideas are in harmony with the newer points of view, believes that the preventive approach to all problems of marriage should aid considerably in avoiding family tensions.

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The aim of marriage is to satisfy the desire for love, children, and a family life. These three together make for the best relationship between a man and a woman, says Bertrand Russell, though it is love which gives an intrinsic value to marriage, and like art and thought, it is one of the supreme things which make human life worth preserving. Marriage is the most important step a human being can take and it is also the biggest gamble, for one can never predict infallibly which marriage will succeed, and which will not. However, it is in the hands of every couple to see that they do their best to maintain and cherish the happiness that they start out with, or have acquired over a period of weeks, months or years, instead of slowly drifting apart till they end in the divorce court.

It is the belief of the writer of this article that only extreme incompatibility of temperaments that cannot at all be adjusted by the couple—in order to live harmoniously together—should end in separation or divorce. In such a case, it is a necessity, if tragedy and heartbreak are to be avoided. Once separated, the couple may manage to be tolerably content, and may even find happiness—either with another partner who is suitable, or in doing some good and useful work. Today, it is not my aim to defend those who wish to obtain a divorce, but rather to see how those who are already married can remain together despite differences. During a lifetime of marriage, couples are bound to

disagree, quarrel, and even wonder why they ever considered marrying that particular person out of so many others? A great number of them may call it a day, and quit, because they are so completely fed up, tired, and disgusted with the whole thing.

But ninety per cent of these very same couples, can, *if they really wish to*, adjust their differences by making a serious study of what is wrong in their marriage, and trying to right it.

Marriage used to be an institution, while now it has become a custom. Men and women rush into it blindly, and then find the obligations and responsibilities it entails unbearable. Contentment in wedlock is dependent upon the realization and full understanding that all happiness and all pleasures must be paid for. Thus, the duties of marriage are things essentially bound up with its happiness, and fulfilment.

In India, marriage has been, for centuries, considered sacred, and therefore not a subject to be lightly discussed. Hence, it is a question on which hardly any one has dared to express unconventional views. Even in Europe this view prevailed till late in the nineteenth century. But in 1878 and 1881 the West was rudely awakened from her hypocrisy by the production of Ibsen's *Doll's House* and *Ghosts*. And in 1883, Bjorson, the Norwegian contemporary of Ibsen, brought out his *Gauntlet*. Tolstoy launched his attack from Russia about the same time with his

*Krutzer Sonata*, though this was written with other motives besides attack on marriage. Then came Anatole France's *Red Lily*. But conservative England still remained un-disillusioned until 1908, when George Bernard Shaw startled the world with his *Getting Married*. Yet, our country—to this day—has not had the courage to face this great question squarely.

Factors which are essential if a man and woman are to be happy in their married life are truth, understanding, and sympathy on the part of both the partners ; proper childhood training ; good health ; proper sex education when the child begins to ask questions regarding the organs of reproduction, and also about conception, birth, and so on. Frankness between couples, and implicit trust and confidence on both sides, are absolutely essential, if constant friction—due to jealousy and suspicion—is to be avoided.

Unfortunately, many women today feel that marriage hampers their freedom, and ties them up to the home too closely. Some do not want to marry at all, while others do not really try to make a success of their marriage, for there are a great many outside activities which take up a good deal of their time.

But women are not the only offenders ! If anything, men are worse, for most of them are so deficient in the qualities of fidelity, kindness, and restraint that women are finding it increasingly difficult to live with them in the capacity of a wife. To be a lover is easier than to be a husband—for it is more difficult to show intelligence and sympathetic understanding in daily life than to make occasional pretty speeches. If only men would give their married life one-tenth of the trouble and thought they give to their business, the majority of marriages would be happy !

Statistics prove that with most young

couples the dangerous period is just after the first six months of married life. So many are prone to making the error of thinking that once they are joined in the bonds of wedlock, it is no longer necessary for them to keep up the efforts to charm and hold which were made during the days of ardent courtship. They have become used to each other, and the glamour of the honeymoon has worn off, and the pretty little attentions and courtesies have stopped. The tragedy sets in when they begin to take each other for granted. One Frenchman expressed it baldly and without frills when he said, "One does not hunt what one has already captured," for the lack of attention he showed his wife. And the French are noted lovers ! Such a pity, for all women adore these little courtesies, and will always be fond of and devoted to the husband who remembers. To women, it is not so much the big things which count as the small ones shown in the course of daily living. At no time is it so essential to work for happiness as after the first glamour of honeymoon days are passed, and the two partners settle down to the more humdrum round of everyday life.

But the fundamental reason for the failure of a good percentage of our Indian marriages is that the very idea of our institution of marriage rests on a false basis—namely, the superiority of the husband. After all, a woman has as much a soul as man. She feels and responds in like manner as her better half. Hence, she is not a chattel, a plaything, or a convenience for her husband's pleasure. Unfortunately, for us Indians, "the husband as an idea is held up before our girls in verse and story, through ceremonial and worship. He is to them not a person but a principle like loyalty, patriotism, or such other abstractions," said Tagore. And this holds good to a large extent even today.

Until this idea of a man-made world gives place to a more rational one, the idea that a woman owes a man both her past and future, while a man owes a woman only his future—if at all he does—will continue to prevail. The wife is expected to be faithful always, while “the husband can live as he pleases, as long as he throws a decent veil over his infidelities.” The woman can marry only one husband, even though experience shows that women do not object to polyandry when it is the custom (Bernard Shaw), while a man can be polygamous and have as many wives (at the same time, or one following the other), as his law permits. The Divorce Bill for Hindus has just been passed in certain of its sections, and widow remarriage is now permitted in some cases.

Besides the points mentioned above, there are several other reasons for so many marriages being failures. In the past, life was comparatively simple; needs were few and easily satisfied. But as we have progressed along the path of civilization, life has become very much more complex, and hence families tend to split up. Large cities offer various amusements and pleasures. Men and women have much more opportunity for meeting people of the opposite sex, and often one finds somebody who is congenial. If carried far, a harmless friendship might end in either an illicit affair, divorce, or separation. And a broken home is good for neither parents nor children.

In days when women were confined to their homes, and their life centred round their families, there was small chance of unhappiness creeping in due to sex relations. But in this ultra-modern twentieth century of ours, we have women's emancipation, greater education, and more freedom than we ever had before in the history of the world. Today, women

hold jobs which formerly were exclusively considered jobs for men. Examples are tree-logging and chopping, road building, flying bombers, working in mines and so on. Thus the family unit is slowly being disintegrated—even in the Orient. Husbands meet lots of interesting women, and wives attractive men, and then the trouble starts. When a husband and wife are truly devoted to each other at heart, but become dazzled—temporarily—by somebody else, and lose their heads and behave in an irresponsible manner, tensions begin and in this way are several perfectly good marriages finally ruined. Thus marriages with every chance of being successful go on the rocks because one or both partners decided to have a “little harmless fun.” Fun of this kind is rarely harmless, and usually is to be heeded as a red light—“danger,” beware! A grown-up man or woman should reason things out and pull up immediately unless he or she wishes to wreck the marriage, and they usually do not. Once distrust, suspicion, and jealousy creep into the marital relationship, it is very difficult to recapture the utter confidence and trust one had formerly in one's mate. Then all the regrets in the world will be of no avail!

It is strange that often the best wives do not succeed in being happy in their wedded state. The well-run household, properly managed servants and children leave very little for the husband to take an interest in at home. And thus the placid tenor of his homelife becomes drab monotony, and he seeks distraction elsewhere. Wifely self-effacement and faithfulness can, at times, be extremely irritating to the man, strange and unreasonable though this may sound. He is the one to hate an always calm and peaceful atmosphere in the home; yet, he is the one who dislikes domestic upheavals, and criticizes the wife and blames her if there are any.



Thus no marriage is without flaws. But the one which comes closest to the ideal is the one in which the union is cemented by the extraordinary combination of human virtues and human failings. We shall find great loveliness allied with a dash of unreasonableness ; selfishness side by side with untold capacity for self-sacrifice, and petty weakness counter-balanced by potential strength

Time and again it has been found that a man loves best the woman whose loyalty he feels he holds only by constant wooing and by the exertion of his personality. The husband who feels he has nothing to fear from male competition is apt to tire of his treasure and seek conquest elsewhere. It, therefore, happens that the man and woman who are essentially human and faulty stand a better chance of winning through together to ultimate happiness than do the partners in a union where one or other is outstandingly perfect.

Marriage need not be considered as an occupation in itself, but can be equally successful and pleasing whether the wife be only a housekeeper, or whether she works. Actually, it is a good thing for a woman to have a few interests and hobbies besides looking after her husband, home, and children, because it keeps her busy, and youthful, and does not give her time to feel sorry for herself, and thus get into mischief.

Unlike the Westerners who "fall in love" and thus choose their mates, Indians have "arranged" marriages, whereby the parents (or close relatives) choose the partner for the boy or girl. Well-meaning parents who are genuinely concerned about the happiness of their child do their best to pick a suitable mate of good family and character, social position, economic means, etc. But only too often is a match made for other reasons than those given

above. For instance, the family may be in debt, so they marry off the girl to the highest bidder—a doddering profligate of seventy ! Or, an uneducated and crude fellow may win for his bride a beautiful and cultured girl. Still another example would be the case of the boy who has been sent abroad to study. He returns full of high hopes to make a name for himself in the country of his birth, and to marry a fine Indian girl of his choice. But no, he is rudely awakened when he is hustled into wedlock with a backward, illiterate girl who has nothing in common with him. How then can such couples be happy ?

Amongst us Indians, it is the belief that the majority of our marriages are happy. Unfortunately, this isn't so. Most of them are not successful. Only they do not publicize the fact as the Occidentals do. Just because a man and a woman joined in matrimony live under a common roof and have children together, it is no indication that they are happy.

Barriers of caste and religion, *purdah*, and age-old customs and traditions, all stand in the way of men and women choosing their own mates in this country. "The Hindu ideal of marriage has absolutely no regard for individual taste or inclination—it is rather afraid of them," states Tagore.

The system prevalent abroad, of falling in love and getting married soon afterwards, also has its drawbacks. Only too often this type of union is based purely on intense physical attraction, which, in most cases, wears off fairly soon. Courtship in the West usually means that the couple are on their best behaviour towards each other, so that faults and imperfections are almost un-noticed. But marriage disillusiones them. "Oh ! love is an intoxication," said a man to his friend. "Yes", cynically replied the other who was married, "but marriage

is the morning after." Unfortunately, this is only too true ! It is a pity that so many marriages which show promise of being happy ones should be wrecked by the carelessness of the partners themselves.

Because of the number of marriages which are proving to be failures these days, and also because the divorce rate is going up alarmingly, several new "Marriage Clinics" are being run in America to advise those who are already married, or those who wish to do so. These consultation bureaus are staffed with experts in marriage relations, psychology, and psychiatry, and their aim is to help all couples who come to them—whether they are engaged, contemplating getting engaged, or are already married.

The findings of these clinics may be of use, so I shall mention some of the points they stress when a couple plan on getting married. The personalities of the two young people should harmonize, so a test is made for eleven different traits which are :—

- (1) Sociable.....Aloof
- (2) Irritable.....Settled
- (3) Passionate.....Cold
- (4) Changeable.....Rigid
- (5) Conventional.....Unconventional
- (6) Undependable.....Dependable
- (7) Well-adjusted.....Badly adjusted
- (8) Easily swayed.....Stubborn
- (9) Timid.....Bold
- (10) Idealistic.....Expedient
- (11) Worrisome.....Carefree

Those who are congenial score fairly close on most of the above traits, and usually stay in the broad middle zone between these poles. We find that a person's scoring on these traits adds up to an accurate picture of his *emotional maturity*, which is one of the most important factors in any successful marriage. People who are emo-

tionally mature are free of complexes, neuroses, and phobias, and, therefore, will make stable, balanced partners in any matrimonial undertaking. We Indians would do wisely to follow this example in order to save many marriages which would otherwise end in separation or divorce.

Here, I think I should state that though divorce should be used only as a *last resort*, in cases where no sort of adjustment seems at all possible, yet, it should be there to free such couples from each other. Divorce should not be permitted on silly and childish grounds, as is often done in the United States, but in cases of absolute failure, it should be granted. In defence of divorce, it is worth quoting G. B. Shaw who says, "Divorce in fact is not the destruction of marriage, but the first condition of its maintenance. A thousand indissoluble marriages mean a thousand marriages and no more. A thousand divorces may mean two thousand marriages, for the couples may marry again."

Technique is needed to overcome the routineness and habit which tends to take the gilt off the gingerbread of marriage, and preserve the charm and glamour of courtship days. It may sound ridiculous, but the fact remains that many marriages come to grief because of apparently insignificant things like small courtesies, caresses, and words of appreciation, which are omitted from the daily relationship, while a major crisis—illness, financial disaster, or other catastrophe—will find the couple standing together. Thus, the success of wedlock depends, to a large extent, upon a high standard of everyday conduct on the part of both partners. "It means behaving as though there was always a danger of losing the love of one's beloved. It means practising the highest code of manners and courtesies always. Habit is

the deadly enemy of love. Therefore, the surprise, the unexpected little attentions, the compliment—spontaneous and sincere, the tenderness, and above all, sympathy go towards making up the technique of successful marriage." It is the sum of all these things that constitute happiness in marriage.

Marital happiness also depends a great deal on the sexual harmony of a couple. And proper sexual maturity is present only with emotional maturity. Repeated tests prove that a promiscuous person—boy or girl, man or woman is generally emotionally unstable, and, therefore, a poor marriage risk.

In determining the chances for happiness a couple have, we must take into consideration the family background of the boy and girl. Clifford R. Adams, Director of the Marriage Counselling Service, Pennsylvania State College, says, "It is profoundly important to know whether the bride and groom had a happy childhood, whether they got along well with their parents, and whether the parents were well-mated. *Happiness in marriage runs in families.* If you were reared in a happy home, free of discord and conflict, you are much more likely to be emotionally mature than if brought up amid bickering and tension." The importance of a pleasant home atmosphere and sound childhood training has been stressed by so many psychologists, psychiatrists, and educationists that it is unnecessary for me to repeat them.

Telling children the facts of life in a frank, simple, and honest way will be laying the cornerstone for future marital happiness. Sex plays no small part in every normal individual's life. But like all good things, it should be indulged in sparingly and with discretion, and always approached with awe and reverence for the Almighty

One who has endowed us human beings with the power to create another of our kind. Homo sapiens are the only animal species in the world that can use sexual gratification at will and for pleasure, instead of merely at the mating season in order to continue the race—as other animals do. Therefore, it is most essential that children get sex instruction from parents and teachers, and are given good books to read on the subject, rather than let them gather odd bits of knowledge from here and there, and from undesirable and questionable sources. Today, we no longer regard sex as a disagreeable thing about which we ought to be ashamed, and about which the less said the better. Sound and worthwhile books on this subject are published for children of different ages, and questions are no longer considered taboo, shameful, and bad form.

Men and women, who are promiscuous, use sexual gratification solely to satisfy their animal instinct and lust. The spiritual and emotional aspects of conjugal unity are lost sight of. And soon, through excess indulgence in it, they become sated, weary, and often diseased. Such people can never make faithful and stable spouses. They will be fickle, unreliable, and hence bad matrimonial bets. Thus we see the need for instilling the correct mental attitude towards sex, while the child is still young and impressionable. It may mean the difference between a happy married life, and a constant unsatisfied hankering after something which they can never attain once they start abusing the gift of sex.

It has been found that men who occupy positions which are under the scrutiny of the community and involve regular hours and a minimum of out-of-town travelling are the safest marriage risks as far as husbands are concerned. These include doctors, bankers, teachers, and

ministers. Travelling salesmen are rightly considered to be the worst bets in marriage. The divorce is also a person to be wary of. Evidence so far indicates that divorced persons in subsequent marriages have less chance for happiness than a person who has never married.

Suspicion and jealousy are serious factors in ruining a marriage. In about 40 per cent of broken engagements or marriages, jealousy has been the root of all trouble. Frankness, straight dealing, understanding, and sympathy must exist between the couple if they are to remain happy. They should share each other's joys and sorrows, and yes, *even* mistakes, if any. Secretiveness and furtiveness will only tend to breed the very qualities which should be suppressed at all costs. Thus, telling the truth to each other is advisable, though not always pleasant. It makes for perfect understanding and trust, and once you have them you are well on the road to a successful marriage with happiness and contentment dominating it.

Any person who is a victim of a chronic disease is not normally a good risk. For example, the husband, through a severe chronic illness, might be physically or mentally incapable of shouldering his side of the responsibility demanded of him as a married man and citizen. He might be peevish, bad-tempered, and demanding, and thus ruin the home atmosphere. He might also expect his wife to mother him as well as their children, and in this way put too great a strain upon her. Of course, this instance can be reversed, and the woman can be the exacting sufferer. People who are afflicted in this way had better remain single—both for their own sakes and that of the community and State to which they belong.

Neurotics and heavy drinkers make bad matrimonial partners. Girls who think

they can reform them after marriage are usually in for a bitter disappointment. Though many eager brides have entered upon their married life with the ardent hope of reforming and moulding their spouses, they have been rudely disillusioned. It is best to accept one's future groom or bride exactly as he or she is, and make the best of it. Everybody has good and bad points, and we should learn to accept them as a part of the total personality of that particular person.

As far as possible, the religions of the couple should be the same if constant friction over religious matters is to be overcome. It is a wise policy for the prospective mates to reach a tolerant understanding, *before they marry*, as to how the children are to be reared.

Many people believe that a considerable difference in age is an ominous factor, but this is not so—provided the man and woman are over twenty, and under forty years of age, and not more than ten years apart. This is the generality, though there are, of course, exceptions to every rule. It has been found that the happiest marriages are of women three or four years older than their husbands. This is in direct opposition to the belief that husbands should be older. When the wife is the elder of the two, she acts as mentor, guide, protector, friend, and mother of her younger spouse. She is also more understanding, forgiving, and tolerant than a younger wife.

Many newlyweds have suffered much heartache and sorrow due to impotence and sterility. In such cases, the cause for the trouble has to be traced. Is it psychological, physiological, or is it due to some defect of the organs of reproduction? Is the man really impotent, or is the woman sterile? The advice of a psychiatrist and surgeon must be obtained, and tests must

be made to find out the cause for the couple not being able to have children. Most normal men and women desire children some very intensely ; hence, not being able to have one of their own might lead to unhappiness and estrangement which gradually ends in a separation of some kind. Except in absolutely hopeless cases, some cure can be found now that science and medicine have made such rapid strides in the advance of knowledge and the application of it. Therefore, it is best that a couple do not despair until they have been definitely told that they cannot, and never will, have children together because of some defect in either one of the partners.

Other factors, which the experts in these marriage clinics consider important, are courtship for at least a year, and a sense of humour to tide them over the rough spots. Things never look so black if you can laugh over them and see the funny side of the situation. It saves a lot of wear and tear on the nerves, and makes for a happy home where gay lilting laughter reigns.

Wars mean separation of husband and wife, a girl and her fiancée—sometimes for long periods of time. Thus a gap in understanding is created between the man who goes off to fight, and the woman he leaves behind. They grow apart, interests change, and new developments in personality take place. They feel strange with each other ; unsure, and lost when they meet again. The man wonders whether he will fit into civilian life again after all the harrowing experiences he has had. Or, he might think that the life led by the people who stayed at home was pretty easy, and he might look down upon them. Then again, war might have sharpened his sense of justice, or dulled it. It may tie him closely to his wife and family, or

he might "go wild" and lose all sense of proportion, decency and discipline. The wife or fiancée too will have lived a life of strain—constant torment about the well-being of the dear one ; abysmal loneliness, hard work, and many other causes also will tend to change her. Thus we see the importance of trying to suit each other all over again.

Many young people, who have been separated due to the war, will want to marry at the first possible moment they can, and one can hardly blame them. These "gangplank" weddings also end in a high rate of divorces, and so couples should take warning from the findings of statistics, and follow the wise plan of waiting for at least six months. This period prior to marriage would give the couple a chance to note changes in each other, to make sure they are still in love, to give the man an opportunity to adjust himself to civilian life, get a decent job, and to make plans for their future. Then if they are still of the same mind, they should marry, and will probably make a success of it.

Here, I should not fail to mention that no matter how bad the odds, or how close to divorce or separation a couple may be, happiness can be achieved by most of these people, if they face these dangers with open eyes, and thrash out their mutual fears, problems, and frustrations, and try to achieve a sensible solution of them. This wise and practical mode of tackling marriage difficulties by the couple themselves is called "mutual psychotherapy," and it can do wonders in even the most despairing situations. Thus divorce should be used only as a last resort in the most hopeless cases where every other means of adjusting matrimonial differences has failed.

Here is Dr. Adams' quick test for finding out whether you are really in love,

or just infatuated by good looks and sex appeal. You might find it both instructive and enlightening :

- (1) Do you have a great number of things that you like to do together ?
- (2) Do you have a feeling of pride when you compare your friend with any one else you know ?
- (3) Do you suffer from a feeling of unrest when away from him or her ?
- (4) Even when you quarrel, do you still enjoy being together ?
- (5) Have you a strong desire to please him, or her, and are quite glad to give way on your own preferences ?
- (6) Do you actually want to marry this person ?
- (7) Does he or she have the qualities you would like to have in your children ?
- (8) Do your friends and associates admire this person and think it would be a good match for you ?
- (9) Do your parents think you are in love ? (They are very discerning about such things).
- (10) Have you started planning, at least in your own mind, what

kind of wedding, children, and home you will have ?

If you can truthfully answer Yes to at least seven of the above, then Dr. Adams' diagnosis would be that you are in love.

In concluding this article, I think I should not forget to say that amongst us Indians it is necessary to organize our system of society in such a way that our young men and women, at least in urban areas, get more opportunities to meet each other socially with a view to marriage. Then, there should be freedom of choice, and no undue interference from parents, relatives, or friends, and no barriers of caste and religion. Widows and widowers should have a second bid for happiness. Marriage should be on the basis of absolute equality as in other civilized countries. In order to facilitate this, the education of women should be enforced by law. For them, "preparation for marriage" should not be limited to learning cooking, sewing, and housekeeping, but also should include the biological and psychological instruction which is far more important in making marriage a success. This latter is equally important for men !

If all the conditions (or even ninety per cent of them) mentioned in this article are meticulously observed by those who marry, it is a safe bet to assume that they will be happy without exception !

# THE BLIND : SOCIAL LIABILITIES OR SOCIAL ASSETS ?

S. C. Roy

## Part II

Until recent years the blind were with rare exceptions restricted to a life of dependency and limited social contacts. This is still the fate of many. Specialised educational methods are, however, progressively removing these limitations. In the following study Prof. Roy considers the techniques of transforming blind individuals from social liabilities to social assets. The historical background of this study appeared in Vol. VII, pp. 197-204 (December, 1946), of this Journal.

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\* In the first part of this article, a rough-and-ready historical survey of the steps which made at least a minority of blind individuals socially efficient out of their more or less axiomatic position of utter incompetence to do anything worthwhile, was undertaken. It is not claimed that all the steps necessary to lead up to the highest peak of this historical development were clearly demonstrated - quite a few of them were merely implied ; nor is it claimed that all of those steps which were picked out and discussed were fully elaborated. But it may be assumed that even from this inadequate treatment of the subject, one will not fail to comprehend the graduated processes through which the concept that the blind can be transformed into social assets from their almost preordained status of social liability, grew, developed and outlived the constantly pursuing onslaughts from sceptics belonging to the ranks of both the seeing and the sightless.

It may be conceded, however, that the previous part of this article did not undertake any considerable discussion on the techniques and methods which have been and should be employed in the process of making the blind useful to themselves and to society. An attempt will be made in this part to present and elaborate a few of the various topics involved in this methodology.

It can hardly be denied that the deprivation of physical vision is one of the most serious handicaps that can ever befall a human being and that it has a formidable tendency to disrupt his entire personality and keep him down as a permanent drag on people around him. In order to counteract these influences successfully, a well-integrated and properly directed plan of activity which will govern his life from the very moment of the onset of blindness, should be adopted. But no plan of work is likely to succeed unless the people at large have an *a priori* confidence in the inherent capacities of a sightless person. To comprehend this point effectively, it is necessary to call attention to the following few passages stated in the first part of this article :

“ To turn a child, seeing or sightless, into a social asset, postulates the prior fulfilment of two fundamental and invariable conditions, viz., vigilant care and protection up to a certain age, and the right type of moral and vocational education in conformity with the needs and abilities of the child.....The emphatic view of the present writer is that a blind child has the potentialities as a child with sight to become a social asset, provided the above-stated two fundamental requisites are fulfilled, and it is also maintained here that if these conditions are carried out in the case of a sightless child, but withheld or neglected in

the case of a child with unimpaired vision, the social usefulness of the former will be, of necessity, even greater both in quality and quantity than that of the latter. In this implicit syllogistic argument, it is, of course, presumed that the physical condition and the mentality of a blind child or adult are what they should be."

Although systematic work with the blind commenced in some European countries about two centuries ago, it is strange to note that a good deal of vagueness in the use of the terms "Blind" and "Blindness" has persisted even up to this day. It is obvious that no type of servicing—social, educational, medical, etc.—can be undertaken on a scientific basis on behalf of the blind unless the total number and the varied types of the clientele to be served are adequately known; and this knowledge is dependent on an absolute understanding of the exact denotation and the connotation of the term "Blindness." The absence of a generally accepted and a clear-cut definition of blindness will be apparent from the consideration of a few representative definitions cited here :

In Great Britain, the Blind Persons Act of 1920 defines the term "Blind" (for adults) as "So blind as to be unable to perform any work for which eyesight is essential," while the Education Act of 1921 defines the same term (for children) as "Too blind to be able to read the ordinary school books used by children." In the United States of America, the official instruction to the enumerators at the time of the last decennial census was : "Include as blind any person who cannot see well enough to read even with the aid of glasses." For census purposes, a sightless individual in Germany was recorded as "A person who, with the help of suitable glasses, cannot find his way in strange places or cannot count outstretched fingers

at a distance of one metre," while, in India, the Census Report of 1931 defined blindness as inability "To count the fingers of a hand held up at one yard's distance."

The flexibility in the application of the terms "Blind" and "Blindness" may lead to such peculiar situations that those who are recorded as blind in one country, may not be so in another, and *vice versa* ; while, in the same country, one who may be set down as blind in terms of a definition applied in a particular year, may not, though retaining the identical visual acuity, be regarded as such in view of the employment of a different definition in another year. This state of affairs is surely detrimental to the application of a scientific method in welfare work for the blind.

The definitions of blindness, in order to be of practical usefulness, should be formulated in terms of the purposes they are intended to serve. Thus, the American Medical Association has adopted the following definitions of blindness :

1. Absolute blindness : inability to perceive light.
2. Economic blindness : inability to do any kind of work for which sight is essential.
3. Vocational blindness : impairment of vision which makes it impossible for a person to do work which he had formerly done to earn a living.
4. Educational blindness : such loss of sight as makes it difficult, dangerous, or impossible to learn by the methods that are commonly used in schools.

To the above may be added the medical definition of blindness, *viz.*, visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye after correction. The results of eye tests, administered for the purpose of determining visual efficiency, are usually stated in fractions, the



numerator of each of which stands for the distance at which a series of letters of varying sizes is actually read, and the denominator, the distance at which the same series of letters should be read with normal vision. In America, 20 has been adopted as the numerator in most tests. The Section of Ophthalmology of the American Medical Association has furnished the following chart of visual acuity : 20/20 is equal to perfect vision ; 20/40 is equal to a loss of about 15 per cent in visual efficiency ; 20/70 is equal to a loss of about 35 per cent ; 20/200 is equal to a loss of about 80 per cent ; and 20/800 is equal to a loss of almost 100 per cent.

It has already been noted that sightless men and women, who are undoubtedly social liabilities, to start with, can be turned into social assets, provided they are subjected and are amenable to certain educational, sociological and psychological influences. But the existence of these people must be known before these influences may be brought to bear upon them. The blind though they run into millions in actual numbers - constitute a mere microscopic minority in the total population of a country. In every large community, it has always been a very hard task to locate the blind individuals and record their reliable statistics. Difficulties are many and varied ; but they must be overcome if all the blind people are to be redeemed from the state of utter ignominy and wretchedness, and are to be allowed to take their legitimate places by the side of their sighted brothers and sisters.

The need of formulating a suitable definition of blindness, just outlined in the foregoing paragraphs, is of paramount importance inasmuch as the census enumerators cannot be expected to make a success of their job with vague definitions. Particularly when, borderline cases are involved,

terminological exactitude is indispensable. This is, however, not the only difficulty in case discovery. In several instances, the parents refuse to reveal the existence of blindness in the family. This refusal is due to many factors: some have been incorrectly informed that all cases of congenital blindness arise from venereal diseases and it is, consequently, a social disgrace to have a sightless offspring. Others look upon blindness as a punitive visitation of the Providence and are reluctant to disclose this calamity in the family. In India, the doctrine of the Law of Karma which makes every individual responsible for his or her sufferings resulting from some sin committed in this or in some previous birth or births, is the nearest approach to this Western idea of divine visitation. While this hypothesis of the theory of Karma is impeccable both from the logical and metaphysical standpoints, it has built up some amount of resistance to the acceptance of certain modern principles of social psychiatry. There are still others who are motivated by their anxiety to screen their unfortunate children from the curious and not too sympathetic world. By and large, the parents feel that there is nothing to gain by the disclosure of blindness in the family ; on the contrary, there is much to lose. The fact that an expectation of some compensatory privilege leads to the revelation of a much larger number of blind persons, was demonstrated after the enactment of the Blind Persons Act of 1920 in Great Britain and of the Social Security Act of 1935 in the United States. Both these Acts confer several benefits and concessions on persons without sight.

Several remedial measures may be suggested. The education of the parents is obviously the foremost task. As a matter of fact, the people at large should be

enlightened about the fundamentals of blindness since any one may become the parent of a blind child on account of some disease or accident. They should be told that to have a blind child is not a reproach and that, despite the absence of physical vision, their child may receive education in various fields and grow up into a useful and self-supporting adult. The examples and achievements of successful blind individuals should be placed before them as often as possible and the work on behalf of the blind should be exhibited and advertised more frequently. The census of sightless people as well as of other physically handicapped groups ought to be recorded annually, and laws requiring parents, physicians, nurses, social workers, and other specified sections of the people, to report handicapped cases to the proper authorities, should be promulgated. In the statistical report, many items of information about sightless persons other than their mere number should be included, e.g., the cause of blindness, the age when blindness occurred, the visual acuity left, the extent of education, economic status, the occupation followed, marital condition, etc. In addition to the census, blind individuals should also be registered with a national organisation working in their behalf. Such registration will ensure efficient and equitable servicing.

After the preparation of a complete and reliable census and the registration record, blind persons should be classified under various heads so that the exact nature of services required in each case may be accurately determined. Classifications, like definitions, ought to be arranged in conformity with the purposes they are designed to serve, such as, age, cause of blindness, age when blindness occurred, degree of vision retained, extent of education, economic condition, etc. The following classifications, suggested by Dr. R. S.

French, the Principal of the California School for the Blind, may be considered:

1. *Degree of visual deprivation :*
  - (a) Total blindness—infability to distinguish light from darkness by vision ;
  - (b) Shadow vision up to 20/200—ability to distinguish light from darkness by vision ;
  - (c) Form and motion vision—ability to perceive the form and motion of objects ;
  - (d) Conspicuous defective vision up to 20/70—ability to read the ordinary print with special aids ;
  - (e) Colour blindness.
2. *Time of onset of blindness :*
  - (a) Born or very early blinded — those who are without useful visual experience ;
  - (b) Those who have dim vision and who retain visual imagery ;
  - (c) Blinded in early adolescence—those who have employed sight usefully in education and in general mental growth ;
  - (d) Blinded in maturity—those whose blindness has practically no retardatory effect on their mental development but who are confronted with a series of formidable readjustment problems ;
  - (e) Blinded in old age.
3. *Collateral effects of the cause of blindness :*
  - (a) Seriously impaired health ;
  - (b) Dulling of other senses, e.g., of hearing, smell or taste ;
  - (c) Feeble-mindedness, or certain mental disabilities ;
  - (d) Pathological nervousness ;
  - (e) Any combination of the above four.

It is apparent that any two or all the three of the foregoing classifications may be used in an almost infinite number of combinations.\* This raises the supremely important question, as to whether the sightless individuals, with their common denominator of visual loss, can ever constitute a class by themselves as they are usually supposed to. This topic will be taken up later in its appropriate place. It may, however, be remarked here that, though grouping is essential to the comprehension and adequate tackling of the myriad of problems confronting the blind, the principal approach to the solution of these problems should be based on a clear recognition of the individual differences existing among the members of the so-called "Class" which the sightless people, by virtue of their visual deprivation alone, are believed to have formed.

In America, the Committee on Statistics for the Blind, sponsored by the National Council for the Prevention of Blindness and the American Foundation for the Blind, has recommended the following classification of visually handicapped persons in respect of their residual amount of vision :

- Group 0. Absolute blindness ;
- „ 1. Light perception only ;
- „ 2. Motion perception and form perception up to 5/200 ;
- „ 3. 5/200, but not 10/200 ;
- „ 4. 10/200, but not 20/200 ;
- „ 5. 20/200 ;
- „ 6. Better than 20/200, but having peripheral vision limited to 20 degrees or less in the widest "diameter ;
- „ 7. Better than 20/200 up to 20/70 ;
- „ 8. Better than 20/70.

The persons belonging to group (0) are "Totally-blind" and should be educated in schools for the blind or in ordinary

schools with suitable provisions for them. Those represented by the groups (1) to (6) may be described as "Partially-blind" and they should follow the same educational procedure as the totally blind. Those covered by the group (7) are "Partially-sighted" and they should be educated either in the sight-conservation classes of schools for the blind or in the sight-saving classes of ordinary schools. Lastly, those coming under group (8) are visually handicapped to some extent, but they can, with some corrective aids, follow the class work in general schools.

Coming to the question of actual servicing it seems that, for a sizable number of blind as well as of other physically afflicted persons, the need for medical service precedes that for any other type of service. Some even go as far as to subscribe to the view that the problems of the handicapped are mainly medical in character. Dr. O. H. Boettger, in a paper on "Aims of Physical Education," presented at the 1930 session of the American Association of Instructors of the Blind, held that, "In the education of the blind, health should come first and all else will follow."

The inferiority of blind individuals to the seeing in physical vigour has been acknowledged by many educators of the blind. It is also maintained by some that the longevity of sightless persons is approximately twenty-five per cent less than that of the seeing. All this may be attributed chiefly to three factors :

First, the underlying diseases or the accidents which are responsible for the loss of vision, leave behind them, in several instances, additional devastating effects on the body and the mind of the victims. Attention is called here to Dr. French's classification of the blind according to the collateral effects of the cause of blindness, stated in the foregoing portion of the

present discussion. One will realise the gravity of this position when one is told that about one-third of all the cases of blindness is caused by general diseases (excluding the specific diseases of the eye), and about one-sixth by accidents.

Secondly, blindness, in most cases, imposes severe restrictions on free movements and physical activities. The result is that the majority of blind persons develop a sedentary habit, and this surely militates against the best principles of sound health.

Lastly, the ambitious blind—and there are quite a few of them—exert themselves rather too much in order to keep pace with the sighted world. They, naturally, have to do it in view of their fight against heavy odds ; but Nature's revenge often manifests itself in the form of fatigue, overexhaustion and nervous debility. Fatigue is also occasioned by the overcrowded programmes of activity, planned in most residential schools for the blind in order to equip the pupils not only with literary education of the same standard as prescribed for seeing children, but also with some amount of training in a number of handicrafts as well as in music.

Some of these problems have been realised by the educators of the blind in advanced countries and measures have been adopted to tackle them effectively. Provisions have been made in schools and agencies for periodic inspections of general health and of eye conditions of the blind. It is obvious that the blind, in order to be capable of undertaking any type of endeavour, must be helped to rid themselves of the contributory effects of the diseases or the accidents responsible for their loss of sight. Blindness is a serious handicap in itself and it should not be, as far as possible, made more complicated by the addition of poor health.

Since the blind, by and large, are more

likely to suffer from bad health than the seeing, attempts should be made to protect and preserve their health in all possible ways. Work on their behalf ought to involve the fullest co-operation between the physicians, on the one hand, and the educators or the social workers, on the other. The institutions for the blind should have on their staff, besides the physicians, some experts in occupational, educational, and recreational therapy. There should be adequate provisions for suitable physical education. In addition to formal callisthenics, arrangements should be made to provide outdoor games and exercises. Blind persons may be engaged in several outdoor activities, e.g., scouting, walking, running, wrestling, swimming, rowing, gardening, hiking, skating, playing football, and so on. It is a matter of great regret that physical education and outdoor games have not received as much attention as they deserve in schools for the blind in India.

Another point should be stressed in connection with the health problems of persons without sight. On account of their inability to learn through visual imitation and to realise how certain physical postures appear to others, some sightless persons develop a number of peculiar traits or mannerisms, such as, swaying the head from side to side, bobbing and weaving the body, twiddling the fingers nervously, carrying the head with chin on the chest, sitting in a slouching position, etc. These quaint manifestations of the body, arising mainly from the inability to imitate through sight, have been termed "Blindisms." Bad postures cause fatigue and affect health. They, moreover, look unpleasant and repulsive to the observers. Many of these can be eradicated through corrective exercises and psychological appeal. Unfortunately, the parents and the teachers do not regard these as worthy of their constant

heed, with the result that blind persons carry on these unsightly habits to the detriment of their health and personality. The problem of blindness should, of course, be handled with extreme tact and grace so that the blind, having these mannerisms, may not acquire the complex of inferiority or a resentful attitude in respect of these peculiarities.

When a blind person is in a fit state of body and mind, he is capable of receiving a programme of training and education within the range of his particular physical handicap, and it is highly desirable that he should be harnessed to such a programme as early as possible. As has been pointed out in the first part of this article, even a seeing person cannot be expected to become a social asset if some amount of education and training, conforming to his needs and inherent capacities, is not provided for him. It is indeed a tragic experience of many educators and workers of the blind that the people at large regard the absence of vision as a factor which altogether cancels the possibility of education; and some of them who believe that there may be a favourable response to the processes of education from at least a particular segment of the blind population, are definitely of opinion that this education is of little or no economic value to the blind. One indeed finds very few sighted individuals who sincerely believe that both education and economic usefulness can reasonably be predicated of serious visual limitation. This accounts for the fact that, in many instances, the parents categorically refuse to send their blind children to school and bear the necessary educational expenses, while they cheerfully do both in respect of their children with sight. It is quite apparent that it will be almost impossible to make the blind useful to themselves and to others so long as this attitude pattern will find favour with the seeing people. A

double responsibility is, thus, assigned to the workers for the blind - they will have to educate not only persons without sight but also those who can see.

It should be understood very clearly that the education of blind children is neither a charity nor a rare privilege. The sightless children have as much right to educational opportunities as those with sight. If the basic principle, that the education of seeing children is a responsibility of the State, be sound, there is no reason why the same principle should not be applicable to sightless children. As a matter of fact, the invidious distinction between the seeing and the sightless, so far as education is concerned, has been eliminated in the advanced Western countries. Both in Great Britain and the United States, for instance, the compulsory laws for school attendance apply both to seeing and blind children, and both these groups are equally entitled to at least elementary education free of charge. In America, almost every State has at least one Government school for the blind, entirely supported by the public treasury, in addition to the private schools which also receive grants from the State. The United States Office of Education—a Federal body, established in 1867 to promote the cause of education in general—has recently created a Special Division with a view to intensifying and co-ordinating the education of the blind in that country. In India, not counting the Native States, there is only one school for the blind which is entirely supported by Government funds, the rest of the welfare activities on behalf of the blind having been left to voluntary efforts, augmented, in some cases, with assistance from the public coffers. In other words, the blind in this country have not yet become more than a social emotion, suffering from all the shortcomings inherent in a system of 'voluntarism.

It is not maintained here that voluntarism should be dispensed with entirely. It is, on the contrary, fully recognised that, in certain spheres of activity, voluntarism is practically indispensable. But what is upheld here is that there are certain other spheres of activity—education being one of them—where the State must play the most predominant role. To put it in the political parlance, the territorial limits of the State and of philanthropy must be settled and adjusted in a way which guarantees the most effective and expeditious service for the blind.

Every institution for the blind, whether it is meant for children or for adults, should, in addition to the objectives aimed at by similar institutions for the seeing, stress two ulterior ends : economic independence of the blind, and their social and psychological adjustment. These two are very often, though not always, dependent on each other, but each is to be achieved by separate methods and techniques. These will be taken up at a later stage of this discussion.

For the purposes of education, the blind may be grouped under three heads:

- (1) Those of preschool age—up to the age of five or six ;
- (2) Those of schoolgoing age—up to the age of twenty ; and
- (3) The adults—twenty and over.

In the paragraphs following, a few points about each of these topics will be noted very briefly.

1. If preschool education be important for seeing babies and infants, it is many times more so for those without vision. The loss of sight at this tender age raises a plethora of educational, psychological and behaviour problems, while the parents are usually so ill-equipped to cope with them. The blind adults, or even the younger blind boys and girls, who are aware of their visual limitations, can take care of

themselves to some extent ; but how can these preschool children, most of whom have not even the faintest idea about the exact nature of their physical handicap, be expected to bring about a satisfactory adjustment to their immediate surroundings ? The children of this age are guided and motivated more by the dictates of their senses than by those of their reflective faculty. How, then, can these children be lured into any kind of activity when the so-called “ Master-sense ” is absent ? This is one of the innumerable problems which crop up in the life of a preschool blind child, and all these problems must be tackled successfully if he is to be assured a happy, useful, and well-adjusted adulthood.

Adequate measures have been taken to meet these problems arising in the lives of preschool blind children. They are taught in residential nurseries, usually known as “ Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies,” or in their homes with the assistance of trained field workers. Agitations advocating the introduction of this training for sightless babies were in evidence in England as early as 1830, but no nursery of this description was established in America until 1901 and in Great Britain until the end of the first world war. It is still a subject of serious dispute whether these children should be taught at a Sunshine Home or in their own homes with the help of expert workers. It is obvious that, in the latter case, the education of the parents is of the supreme moment. Usually, the parents are totally ignorant about the proper ways of handling these children. They alternate between coddling and neglect and both these attitudes prevent the normal growth of these children. The Sunshine Homes are free from these drawbacks as the blind children are brought up under the common roof and are given the same treatment, facilities and environment. It

must be admitted, at the same time, that the nursery schools cause a rather too premature segregation of these children from their parents and the home surroundings, and this may lead to grave social and psychological maladjustments for these unfortunate children.

Besides these questions of care and discipline, there are several others, mainly of the psychological and psychiatric nature, which can never be solved with any measure of satisfaction unless the blind children are entrusted from their very infancy to the care and guidance of experts in the psychology and education of the visually handicapped. For instance, autostimulation, blindness, egocentricity, verbalism, introversion, inferiority complex, and a host of other personality difficulties, which start operating in the lives of blind persons from their very childhood, can never be effectively tackled except by people trained in the psychology of blindness.

It is a common experience that the parents feel the handicap of their children's blindness more keenly than do the children themselves. They generally discourage their sightless children from engaging in many simple activities, in the fear that the latter may hurt themselves or feel awkward in performing them. It should be remembered that, despite the lack of vision of these children, their physical, mental and emotional well-being must be maintained on the normal level, and it is not possible to do so unless these children are allowed the same freedom of action and are entrusted with the same duties and responsibilities as the seeing children of comparable age. For example, the blind children should be expected to dress and feed themselves and to perform certain other daily duties as their sighted brothers and sisters.

The most important consideration is, how to stimulate the sightless children into activity in the absence of the countless

visual stimuli which motivate those with sight? Naturally enough, the toys for the use of these children should be such as appeal to their senses of touch and hearing. The parents should talk to them very often and convey to them a feeling of security so that they are encouraged to crawl or walk without any apprehension. They should be afforded complete opportunities for manual explorations since, with the blind, particularly at this age, actuality is tactuality. It is better for them to have a few minor cuts and bruises than to be entirely deprived of free and independent movement. They, of course, should be guarded from grave and unnecessary hazards. They will never feel secure and be goaded into activity unless their terrible sense of isolation and loneliness, resulting from their serious visual disability, is removed by intelligent companionship of the members of their families as well as by their full and active participation in the day-to-day happenings in their homes. The following remark of Dr. Childs, a professor of psychology at Columbia University, is applicable to persons, blind or seeing, of all age groups :

"For an individual to be a member of a society and yet have no responsible part in its activities, is a form of social ostracism that breeds disastrous spiritual consequences."

A blind child cannot obviously become an integrated member of his family or of a society if he is confronted with parental or social rejection and is, thereby, compelled to withdraw in himself in order to obtain solace, strength and stimulation. He ought to be encouraged to shake off his sedentary and egocentric habits, mingle and play with the seeing children, and to forget his visual limitations as often as possible. There is nothing wrong in referring to his blindness in his presence, provided it is done in a most casual and non-emotional

way. His lack of vision should, however, never be lamented or spoken of in a disparaging manner in his hearing.

The first kindergarten school for the blind was established at Boston in 1887. Of course, most of the Sunshine Homes for blind babies retain children up to the age of five or six, and provide both nursery and kindergarten training to them. At the kindergarten stage, these children are taught free and fearless movements of the body, lessons in the adjustment to the seeing world, elementary music, Braille, and simple handicrafts.

In India, the number of blind children under the age of five is about fifteen thousand ; but no provision has yet been made for their preschool education. These children, thus, commence the tough trek of their lives with two outstanding handicaps—blindness and, the lack of preschool training.

2. It has already been noted that the advanced countries of the West enacted legislations about half a century ago, making the school attendance of blind children free and compulsory in the same manner as that of the seeing. The first law of this description was passed by the British Parliament in 1893, providing for the free and compulsory education of sightless children between the ages of five and fourteen. Attention has also been called to the fact that these countries have fully recognised, the education of blind boys and girls as a public responsibility and that they have established a network of educational institutions for them, entirely supported by the public treasury.

A Committee on Minimal Essentials, set up by the American Association of Instructors of the Blind, has advocated the following four aims of education of the blind :

(a) *Physical*.—“ The development of a strong and healthful physique capable

of resisting disease and meeting the unusual physical strain inherent in the handicap.” The health and medical problems, accentuated by blindness, as well as the special need of physical education for the blind, have already been noticed in the previous portion of this article.

(b) *Academic*.—“ A thorough elementary and high school education equivalent to that afforded to seeing children.” In order to make the academic education of the blind successful and comparable to that of the seeing, several factors have to be taken into consideration, some of which are briefly noted below :

I. The success of literary education is dependent on the availability of a sufficient supply of books and periodicals in Braille as well as talking-books. In order to meet this need, several printing presses have been installed in the Western countries for the purpose of embossing books and journals in Braille. Lakhs of books on various subjects have already been transcribed in this type, and there are about four scores of periodicals, including the famous “ Reader’s Digest,” printed in English Braille. Before the last great war, there was even a daily paper published in Braille in Japan. A number of studios have also been set up for the purpose of producing the talking-book records. In the United States of America, there are twenty-seven public libraries for the blind, controlled by the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C., and financed by the Federal Government, from where Braille literature and talking-books are supplied to blind readers without any charge. Besides these public libraries, there is a large number of private libraries, attached to blind institutions and printing plants. By a recent Act of the Congress, an annual appropriation of \$1,125,000 (about Rs. 3,700,000) has been made for printing Braille literature and the manufacture of talking-books. It is in-



interesting to note that this enormous figure was reached last year through a gradual process of augmentation from the initial modest amount of \$10,000 (Rs. 33,000) granted for the first time in 1879 for Braille printing. To facilitate and encourage reading among the blind, laws have been passed granting the libraries and the blind readers the franking privilege for the purpose of sending Braille books and the talking-records through the post. In other countries, like Great Britain, where no such franking privilege is in existence, there are regulations permitting the despatch of reading matter for the blind at considerably reduced postal rates.

II. It is apparent that the Braille printing plants and the talking-book studios cannot be expected to reproduce the existing as well as the ever-growing range of printed matter for the direct use of the blind. The sightless boys and girls in schools and colleges and those outside these educational institutions are required to read a vast number of books and journals which are not available either in Braille or on the gramophone disc. They can do this with the assistance of paid or voluntary readers. In the United States of America, several State Governments grant from \$200—500 annually to blind students in order to pay for reading services. But the blind usually require much more reading than what is assured with this financial aid. Arrangements have, therefore, been made in many Western cities and towns to provide the blind with voluntary readers. Without the help of these kind-hearted and socially inspired persons, many among the blind could never have completed their studies or prepared themselves adequately for their professions.

Several of these voluntary readers are not, however, familiar with the special requirements of the blind. It is desirable that they acquire some knowledge about

blindness and about the blind so that their services are rendered 100 per cent useful to those for whom they are meant. It may be of interest to read the following list of "Do's and Don'ts" for voluntary readers for the blind, prepared by the New York Association for the Blind :

- (i) Always make your presence known. The blind cannot see who you are.
- (ii) Be natural. Talk with a blind person as you would a seeing person.
- (iii) Be cheerful. The majority of the blind are not depressed.
- (iv) Be patient. It takes the blind longer to do many things.
- (v) Use tact. Remember, a blind person is just like you except that he cannot see.
- (vi) Use special care in speaking. Your voice should be moderate and pleasant.
- (vii) Always leave doors open or closed as you found them.  
The blind have probably left them that way on purpose.
- (viii) Instill independence. The blind man is his own best helper.
- (ix) Help familiarize the blind with their surroundings. They are at ease when they know where they are.
- (x) Don't make unnecessary noises. The blind are largely dependent upon the sense of hearing. Unnecessary noises are confusing.
- (xi) Don't misplace their articles. It is doubly hard to find articles when you cannot see them.
- (xii) Don't leave anything around that could cause injury or discomfort through touch.
- (xiii) Don't give false sympathy. The blind don't want pity but consideration.

It may be observed that these salutary instructions should be followed not only by the voluntary readers, but by every one who has to deal with a sightless individual. This correct understanding of the needs and ways of the blind will help to socialise them, and their social adjustment is surely one of the paramount aims of blind education.

In order to point out another aspect of the reading service for the blind, a few passages may be quoted from "*Whereas I was Blind*," an autobiography of Lieut. Colonel Sir Ian Fraser, C. B. E., who lost his vision in the first world war in his 'teens and who is at present a member of the British Parliament and the Chairman of St. Dunstan's in London :

"You will find reading aloud a very great pleasure, and in many respects a necessity. Here again an easy relationship between yourself and the person who volunteers to read to you is most important. Assume that your companion would not be reading to you unless he or she wanted to. While, therefore, you hope that he will enjoy the book or the newspaper himself, his primary concern is to read to you. If he is a stranger, or at any rate a stranger to this job, he'll probably say, 'tell me how you like me to read to you.' The answer is that you want him to read as fast as possible and without making comments at the end of the paragraphs or pages. You do not want the reader's personality or interpretation to come between you and the writer, and this is particularly the case where private letters are concerned. I remember an old lady who read me the newspaper once : it went something like this—'Liner torpedoed in the Atlantic. My ! Isn't that awful !! I don't think we'll read about that. Parson marries a Kitchen-maid. I wonder why they do that sort of thing?'—A long silence lasting some minutes while she reads a 'snappy bit which

appeals to her—then, 'Oh, of course. Canadians, splendid attack. I'm tired of the war, I don't think we'll read that. Well, there isn't any news this morn'ing.'—A most fruitful session !"

III. The training of teachers for the blind is also an important subject, the urgency of which has not been properly realised by all school administrators. They often appoint teachers who never taught any blind child before or had no training in this special field. At times, it also happens that they never even came in direct contact with any blind person, and the main reason of their choosing this work is to be sought in the principle of the line of the least resistance. Dr. T. D. Cutsforth, himself blind, is of the opinion that the teachers in blind institutions are generally of a lower intellectual calibre than those of the ordinary schools. Whether or not this statement is completely correct, it is difficult to say ; but that it contains some element of truth can hardly be denied. \*

Blindness involves several psychological and pedagogical problems, and it is impossible for a person to be an efficient teacher of the blind without an adequate acquaintance with them. The mechanics of Braille reading and writing should be mastered by every teacher of the blind. Without this, he cannot be expected to appraise the difficulties which the sightless pupils experience in learning. It is strongly recommended that the teacher should learn to read Braille with his fingers. This will bring him into closer touch with the reading situation of his pupils.

Again, the teacher of the blind must have a clear understanding of the special psychological situations arising directly or indirectly from the loss of vision. Instructional or disciplinary measures, in the absence of this knowledge, do not lead to desirable results. He should be familiar with the questions as to how memory,

imagination, intelligence, sense-impressions, etc., are affected by the deprivation of sight, and what bearing they have on the educative processes in general.

It should be the duty of every school authority to recruit teachers from among those who have obtained this specialised training. Of course, there should be provisions for such training, so that a sufficient number of trained teachers may always be available. Such training facilities have been offered in England since 1907. The objectives of this training are described as follows :

- (i) To promote the training of teachers ;
- (ii) To raise their status by giving them a recognised position as specialists in the field of education ;
- (iii) To give teachers an opportunity of submitting their qualifications to an accredited body ;
- (iv) To raise the tone and character of the institution generally ;
- (v) To diffuse by means of a library, lectures and otherwise, information on all matters connected with the educational, moral, mental and social conditions of the blind ; and
- (vi) To encourage interchange of thought and opinion and to promote fellowship.

In England, every school for the blind is compelled to recruit teachers who have passed this training examination and have obtained the diploma from the College of Teachers of the Blind. It is deprived of its Government subsidy if it employs a teacher without this diploma.

In America, the first training programme for teachers of the blind was initiated in 1920 at the Perkins Institution for the Blind in collaboration with the Harvard University by Dr. E. E. Allen, the

then Director of that school. Training facilities have been offered on a larger scale at Teachers College, Columbia University, in conjunction with the New York Institute for the Education of the Blind on the initiative of Dr. M. E. Frampton, the Principal of the New York Institute for the Education of the Blind. This type of training is also offered at four other American Universities more or less regularly, *viz.*, Temple University in co-operation with the Overbrook Institution for the Blind, Duke University with the North Carolina State School for the Blind, Ohio State University with the Ohio State School for the Blind, and at the California University with the California School for the Blind. Besides, a number of short summer courses are arranged in different educational institutions of the country.

In order to make this training successful, three conditions ought to be satisfied :

First, a sufficient number of persons should be induced to receive this training. Some people have very queer notions about the blind and hesitate to work with them. These people should be convinced of the normality of the sightless persons by acquainting them with the activities of blind schools and the achievements of blind individuals.

Secondly, there should be ample scope for the absorption of these trained teachers in schools and organisations for the blind. As in England, there ought to be a rigid principle everywhere that no person should be employed as a teacher for the blind unless he has obtained a certificate or diploma in this specialised training.

Lastly, these teachers must be given good salaries, so that the best brains may be attracted to this field. Generally, the teachers of the blind receive a lower scale of pay than those in ordinary schools. But the proverbial mediocre teaching in schools for the blind will not cease unless very capable persons are recruited for this work and paid reasonably high salaries.

IV. It has been a long-standing controversy regarding the desirability or otherwise of employing blind persons for teaching similarly afflicted children. Those who argue against it contend that the sightless teachers are unable to maintain discipline in the classroom and to correct the mannerisms which are so common with children without sight. There is, no doubt, some force in this contention. For this reason it may be conceded that there should not be a sightless teacher for teaching the blind children in infant classes. It is, however, strongly felt that, in the upper classes, the sightless teachers are even more efficient than the sighted. Because, in the first place, they are thoroughly familiar with the techniques of Braille reading and writing ; and, in the second place, they naturally understand the psychological situations, brought about by blindness, with greater sympathy and thoroughness than the teachers with sight.

Besides these two advantages, there are certain other considerations for which the sightless persons should be allowed to teach blind children. The inferiority complex which is so common with these children is gradually removed through the personal example of the sightless teacher. The success of the teacher in his own life brings hope and encouragement to his blind pupils and provides incentives for their

work. Again, when a sighted teacher explains something which his sightless pupils cannot easily follow, the latter are tempted to excuse their inability by the plea that the subject is easy for a sighted person, but they themselves are not expected to find it so easy. This serves as a deterrent to the exercise of their best efforts. But this does not happen when they learn under a teacher without sight.

Dr. Carl Strehl, the Director of a German blind institution rightly says, "As a rule, the blind child will have more faith in a blind teacher ; for in the blind teacher one has a reason to expect a deeper understanding of the psychological problems of the blind child. His example will usually help to overcome the inferiority complex that is so common with blind children."

Remarking about the defects of a sighted person teaching the blind, Dr. E. E. Allen, the Director Emèritus of the Perkins Institution for the Blind in America, states, "She (the sighted teacher) teaches academic subjects and may teach them extremely well after academic fashion ; but blindly, nevertheless, for since she is blissfully ignorant of the difficulties blind people have to cope with after school days, she is not consciously preparing boys and girls for the life that awaits them. Perhaps you know that the French act upon the conviction that none but the blind are fit to teach the blind."

Dr. T. R. Armitage, the founder of the British and Foreign Blind Association, held the view that no institution and organisation for the blind should have a sighted person on its staff. He was prompted to advocate this opinion in the belief that it is never possible for a sighted person to have a thorough conception of the numerous problems confronting the sightless individuals.

From all these observations it should be understood that blindness *per se* is a strong qualification for a teacher of the blind. The sightless teacher must be highly educated and must have the specialised training for teaching the blind. If these conditions are fulfilled, a blind person is certainly better fitted to be a teacher of the blind than his sighted compatriot. Mainly for the benefit of the pupils, the ratio of sightless teachers should constitute at least 25 per cent of the entire teaching staff of every school for the blind.

A brief pause may be permitted at this stage in order to call attention to the condition of blind education in India in respect of the factors in academic education, just dealt with in the foregoing paragraphs. This will convey a rough idea of what still remains to be accomplished for at least a minority of the Indian blind with a view to transforming them into social assets.

According to the Census Report of 1931, there were about seventy thousand sightless boys and girls in this country between the ages of five and twenty. There are about thirty institutions intended to impart education to those belonging to this age level. From the Western standpoint, this number of schools is hardly adequate for seventy thousand blind persons inasmuch as there are over sixty institutions for about fifteen-thousand sightless boys and girls in America. But, strangely enough, only about one thousand pupils are receiving education in these thirty institutions, although there is accommodation for more than two thousand persons in them. The blind institutions in India experience extreme difficulties in attracting students as they have to compete with mendicancy, open or disguised, which absorbs the overwhelming majority of the blind of this age group. Unless the attractions for this profitable beggary be removed,

there is very little chance of this vast number of the blind coming forward for education and a disciplined life. All the progressive countries in the West have abolished beggary by legislation and have also passed laws for compulsory school attendance for blind boys and girls. The latter have, therefore, no other alternative than to seek admission in schools and classes for the blind.

There is no central printing press or a library for the blind in this country. The obvious result is that the Indian blind—either of schoolgoing age or adults—have no books or journals in Braille which can be employed to promote their education or recreation. It is a matter of deep regret that the boys and girls of blind schools in India have to continue the hard task of embossing their textbooks with their own hands. This practice involves a great hardship and a huge waste of time on the part of these school children. Reading and writing Braille is a much more slow and tedious process than ordinary reading and writing, and the education of these children, thus, becomes slow and unpleasant in view of the necessity of having to transcribe the textbooks by the educants themselves. To add to this misery, there is no arrangement in this country to furnish the blind students with paid or voluntary readers to compensate for the total absence of Braille literature and talking-books. This has prevented many sightless aspirants from pursuing higher education and the so-called learned professions.

• There is no recognised provision for professional training for the intending teachers and workers for the blind in this country except the one introduced at the Calcutta University in 1940. The number of sightless teachers in schools for the blind in India is too insignificant to be recorded. Having regard to these circumstances, it is small wonder that the blind in this

country, with a very few exceptions, have not yet been able to emerge from the pristine state of social liability.

V. There is not always a clear realisation on the part of the educators of children without sight that the intellectual education of the latter must be supplemented by contacts with the objective realities as often as possible. There is almost an infinite number of percepts which the seeing children acquire without any conscious effort at all—they, more or less, thrust themselves on the consciousness of these children and become an inseparable part of their mental equipment. But the blind children require patient and protracted instruction in order to gain this perceptual knowledge directly on some occasions, and vicariously on others. It is hardly necessary to point out that the education of these children must, of necessity, remain inadequate in several important respects and that their social acceptability is sure to be affected adversely unless endeavours are made to extend and perfect their knowledge of concrete objects.

The colossal ignorance about ordinary objects, which may be occasioned by visual impairment, unless counterbalanced by appropriate training, may be illustrated by the results of tests and discussions in a prominent school for the blind in the United States. Some of the adolescent boys and girls of this institution stated that a rat was as large as a rabbit, a cow was about six feet high, a sheep was a little smaller, and a robin was as large as an owl. This kind of erroneous knowledge is inevitable where concepts cannot be obtained through, or verified by, direct experiential contacts. A reference to the knowledge of the rural conditions, possessed by a person born, raised and caged in the city all his life, and *vice versa*, may be made in this context. The only important difference is that a city-bred person may enlighten

his ideas about the rural conditions by visiting a village, while a villager can do the same regarding the city life, but the visual aspects of the outside world remain, for ever, impervious to those who are incurably blind.

The remedial measure, in the case of the blind, is to allow them to have tactual experience of as many animate and inanimate objects as feasible. The school must arrange for them frequent excursions to places of interests, e.g., the zoological garden, the botanical garden, the museum, the post office, different kinds of shops, etc., and the children should be permitted to gain a direct knowledge of animals and objects through the sense of touch. Every institution should also have a museum of its own with a large variety of stuffed animals, birds, and various kinds of toys and tangible representations in order to provide to its blind pupils a knowledge of the objective world.

It is, of course, undeniable that there are many objects and natural phenomena which do not submit to tactual manipulations. These things should be explained to the blind in terms of the sensory experiences open to them. Else, the knowledge of the visual world will be more verbal than real with these children.

VI. All the points touching the academic education of the blind, elaborated so far, have been discussed with particular reference to residential institutions, although they are equally applicable to the educational endeavours of sightless boys and girls in ordinary schools or in their own homes. In every country, the education of the blind was introduced in boarding schools in view of the special methods, techniques, and appliances required in this type of education and also because of the transportation difficulties of persons without vision. For some time past, however, the traditional practice of educating sightless

children in segregated and cloistered institutions has been seriously questioned by many educators of the blind on psychological, educational, sociological, and financial grounds.

In the beginning of the 19th century, Johann Wilhelm Klein, the founder of the blind institution in Vienna, appears to be the first to advocate the need of educating the blind with the seeing in ordinary schools. No heed was, however, paid to this advocacy as the conception was too much ahead of the times. In 1851, Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, the first Director of the Perkins Institution for the Blind in America, revived this suggestion of Klein and stressed the advantages of this particular variety of "Co-education" of the blind and the seeing in general schools. It was left to Mr. Frank H. Hall, one of the foremost educators of the blind in the United States, to carry out this idea into actual practice in Chicago in 1900. Since his time, this movement in America has become so popular to the parents and the guardians of visually handicapped children and to the children themselves that, according to an educational survey in 1936, there were more blind and partially-sighted boys and girls studying in ordinary schools than those enrolled at residential institutions for the blind--the recorded number being 7,251 in ordinary schools and 5,851 in special institutions. A particular note should be taken of the fact that, although the first residential school for the blind in America was established 68 years before this amalgamated education took a practical shape, yet, in course of only 36 years, the ordinary seeing schools served the educational needs of a larger number of visually handicapped boys and girls than the institutions for the blind, of which there are over 60 in the United States! In New York City alone, four schools for the seeing have introduced the

education of the blind in spite of the existence of two residential institutions for the blind in that city.

There must be very good reasons for the phenomenal growth of this particular type of "Co-education" in America. Only the most important of these reasons are mentioned here :

- (i) Dr. Harry Best, Professor of Sociology at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.A., rightly points out that, "The principle of the day-school is nothing but the manifestation of the scientific conviction, found in evidence in more than one field of education and of child welfare today, that institutional life for children should be reduced to its lowest possible limits. It results from a general belief that the institution is more or less out of place in modern conceptions of the treatment of the child, and is to be accepted only in the absence of anything better." Mr. Frank H. Hall, referred to previously, believed firmly that, "The institutionalization of blind children constitutes a handicap in later life even more serious than the lack of vision." As a result of this institutionalisation, a blind child is made to feel dependent upon the rest of society and is led to believe that the world owes him a living. Such an attitude chills personal efforts and ambitions and causes blindness to be associated with social parasitism in the minds of the seeing people. Besides, the constant associations with children similarly afflicted make it very difficult for many to acquire

normal personalities. At the end of this segregation from society for several years, the blind children find it rather hard to adjust themselves psychologically to the seeing world.

- (ii) The parents and the guardians are more familiar with ordinary schools than with special institutions, and they prefer to send their blind children to the seeing schools if special provisions exist. Institutions are usually looked upon with suspicion by them.
- (iii) According to the modern principles of educational psychology, an institution can never take the place of home. Due to the long residence in a special institution, a blind child's attitude towards his home and the members of his family undergoes a considerable change. The parents themselves come to think in course of time that there is another agency to take care of their blind child, and, therefore, become lax in discharging their parental duties towards him. As Dr. R. V. Merry, himself blind, and one of the notable educators of the blind in America, remarks, "The home contacts give the blind child an appreciative understanding of the economic problems of the home, and urge him to make an effort towards self-support."
- (iv) The standard of education in special institutions is very often inferior to that obtaining in ordinary seeing schools. On this point, Dr. Merry has the following observation to make :

"It should be pointed out that, on the whole, day-school classes for blind children are not so prone to adhere to outworn theories and methods as are residential institutions. The fact that these classes are a recognised part of the public school systems of cities where they are located, tends to bring them in line with the best current educational practices for seeing children." Besides, if a blind pupil pursues his education in a general school, it will be easy for an average person, to whom he may apply for a position upon the completion of his studies, to measure the exact extent and standard of his accomplishment.

- (v) If blind children attend ordinary schools, the seeing people get a better opportunity to be conversant with the needs and problems arising out of their deprivation of vision. The sighted and the sightless children also learn to understand each other from their early associations in their school life, and the questions of superiority or inferiority complex can hardly arise.
- (vi) In ordinary schools, blind pupils find an opportunity to make friendships which may be of immense use to them in future. Their sighted friends are likely to be more helpful to them in social and business ways on the termination of their school years than their classmates of a special institution.
- (vii) In order to attend a day-school, the blind children have to go



out on the street' every day. This gradually gives them courage to travel independently. It will be shown later that the economic life of blind adults is curtailed considerably because of the inability on the part of many to undertake independent travelling, as it is not financially possible for most of them to pay for a guide or to secure a voluntary one.

(viii) The generally all-embracing programme controlling all the waking hours of the sightless inmates of a residential institution, gives them very little opportunity to develop spontaneity and freedom of action.

(ix) Lastly, the maintenance cost in a day-school is about fifty per cent less than in a special institution. The blind boys and girls attend the ordinary schools in their localities with their sighted brothers and sisters and pay the usual tuition fees. They receive lessons in the same class with other pupils. On the teaching staff there is one who is specially trained in the educational and psychological problems entailed by blindness. He spends some time every day with the blind pupils of his school and helps them to meet their peculiar difficulties. Otherwise, there is hardly any distinction between the blind and seeing children in an ordinary school.

Having regard to the present economic conditions in India, the last of the foregoing arguments should prove to be the most weighty. The parents and the guardians are usually too poor to send their sightless

children and wards to the existing institutions situated far away from their homes and to defray the expenses necessary for education in residential institutions. Admitting, for the sake of argument, that residential institutions are better suited to the needs of sightless children, a huge amount of funds will be necessary to establish new institutions throughout the country. It is, however, apparent that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to collect the requisite funds to set up a sufficient number of institutions to meet the demands of about seventy thousand blind boys and girls. The obvious way out is that these children should stay in their own homes and receive education in the ordinary schools of their localities without much expense to the parents and the guardians.

It must be mentioned here that the subject of residential institution versus day-school for the blind is still a matter of heated controversy. The proponents of the residential institution point out that, notwithstanding certain advantages of the day school, the latter is not in a position to provide for the type of musical and industrial training which the majority of the sightless adolescents require. This dispute, however, has yielded two compromises. According to the first, the blind boys and girls should study first in ordinary schools until they are ready for specialised musical or industrial education which should be provided by special institutions. The second compromise, urges, on the other hand, that the blind children should join the residential institutions first in order to master the special methods and techniques and that they should be sent up to ordinary schools during the last two or three years of their secondary education. It should be noted that the second compromise has been given effect to by the authorities of most of the progressive institutions for the blind in America.

The position in Great Britain is, however, a sharp contrast from that in the United States. The day-school movement for the blind was given a trial in Great Britain for some years, but it has virtually been abandoned in favour of residential institutions.

VII. In connection with the academic instruction—elementary and secondary—of sightless boys and girls, the incorporation of a few words about their higher (college or university) education seems to be in order inasmuch as those under consideration in the present section are between the ages of five and twenty and as those coming within the range of the last few years of this age period are old enough to be students of a college or of a university. The first and the foremost question regarding the higher education of the blind has been and, to some extent, still is ; Should they go to college ? Those who argue against the high education of the blind point out that this type of preparation is dependent on the use of sight to such a high degree and that competition in the so-called learned professions is so keen that the sightless persons will be at a terrible disadvantage in these fields of endeavour. Many have also questioned the intellectual adequacy of the blind for the successful prosecution of higher education. This well-meaning but unwarranted doubt led the authorities of most of the schools for the blind in every country, particularly in the pioneering phase of this work, to provide only elementary education for their pupils and to lay special emphasis on manual training.

It has been established experimentally that blindness *per se* does neither raise nor lower the intelligence of a person. The fact that the incidence of mental deficiency among the blind is higher than among the physically normal people is a ributable to the social situations arising from the lack

of vision and not to the visual disability itself. This, indeed, is a strong argument for the vital need of education for the blind as it is through the right type of education that they can eradicate a good proportion of these social situations which either result from, or are concomitant with, the loss of physical vision.

The intellectual possibilities among the blind were in evidence long before a universal system of education was set up for the benefit of these people. History records a large number of sightless persons who rose to intellectual eminence mainly through their own exertions. For instance, Didymus of Alexandria, blind from his fourth year, became a professor in theology at the University of Alexandria in the fourth century A. D., while Nicholas Saunderson, who lost his sight in his first year, was appointed a professor at the Cambridge University early in the 18th century, and the subject of his lectures, strangely enough, comprised the Newtonian theories of light and colour.

It is undeniable that every blind person is not fit for higher education—this being equally true in the case of those who can see. To quote Dr. Carl Strehl, an illustrious educationist in Germany, who has already been mentioned in some other context in the present article : “ Only the exceptionally talented, physically healthy and determined blind person who has a decided preference for mental work should be encouraged to enter a university. If these requirements are fulfilled, the blind intellectual worker will probably make a better living than a blind manual worker ; eyesight will be less missed by the blind man in the intellectual field than by the blind handworker. In the case of a person losing his sight when attending an advanced school or a university, it will have to be seriously considered whether his physical and mental condition justify a continuation of his studies,”

It is equally undeniable that higher education is fraught with many challenging difficulties for persons with serious visual limitations. It is highly desirable that the sightless aspirants for higher education should enroll themselves in general colleges or universities and that there should not be any special and segregated institution for higher learning on the model of the Gallaudet College, situated in Washington, D. C., which is the only college of its kind in the world, designed exclusively to serve the hypacusic. Several attempts were made in the last century to set up a similar college for the blind in the United States ; but it should be noted that the severest attack against this type of specialized institutions came from the ranks of the sightless individuals themselves. The pursuit of education in ordinary colleges or universities, beneficial as it surely is in many respects, gives rise to various problems in adjustment and transportation. These can be and have been taken care of quite satisfactorily through the resourcefulness of the sightless educants themselves as well as through the co-operation of the students, faculty members, and the administrative staff of the institution concerned. Besides, steps have been taken in the advanced countries, as pointed out before, to remove the difficulties arising from the necessity of handling an enormous quantity of printed matter, through the financial assistance from the State to pay for the services of readers, the provision of reading services on a voluntary basis, and through the production of Braille literature as well as talking-books with the Government and private aid. The obvious hurdles in the pursuit for higher education by the blind should not be marshalled into an argument against encouraging those among them who are fit for, and desirous of, such education. To do so is not only an irrational interference with the principle of self-determination, but

it also deprives society of the useful services which could be rendered by the blind intellectuals if proper opportunities were offered to them.

(c) *Vocational*.—"Vocational instruction adapted to each pupil's ability with a view to enabling him to become self-supporting." The importance of appropriate vocational guidance and vocational training for the blind in school can hardly be overemphasized in view of the deplorably circumscribed range of employment possibilities for these persons in later life. This subject has received an elaborate treatment in another article by the present writer, written for this journal, and it is felt that to cover the same ground here will be an unnecessary repetition. The readers are, therefore, referred to "Vocational Guidance of the Blind," *The Indian Journal of Social Work*, Vol. V, pp. 213-221 (March, 1945).

(d) *Social*.—"Socialization of each pupil to enable him to become an acceptable and contented member of the community." It has already been mentioned in the earlier part of this discussion that social adjustment of the blind should be one of the two supreme aims of every institution intended for these persons. The visual disability has an unmistakable tendency to isolate and segregate its victims from the rest of the community and to restrict their association to those similarly afflicted or to compel them to take refuge into themselves in complete submission to what they regard as an inescapable situation. This attitude pattern is inevitable when a sightless person feels himself as cut loose from others and loses his sense of belongingness to his fellow human beings. Every earnest endeavour must be made to retrieve him from this drooping mental state, else, he will remain as a confirmed social liability for the rest of his life.

It should be clearly recognised that the most satisfying type of social adjustment of the blind is inseparably linked up with their economic independence and the transformation of the present-day illogical and inconsistent public attitude towards the effects of blindness. Obviously enough, the sightless individuals cannot be expected to achieve any measure of social adjustment if they are denied all opportunities of earning a reasonable livelihood and if they are treated by the physically normal as sub-human and absolutely unnecessary to the social organism.

These two momentous topics, viz., the economic independence of the blind and the public attitude towards blindness, will be discussed later in their proper places. At present, the discussion will be confined to that aspect of social adjustment which can be and should be taken care of in an educational institution. Some components of social adjustment of the blind through education have already been indicated in connection with the need of athletics in a blind school as well as the education of the blind with the seeing in ordinary schools. An attempt to demonstrate the value of the role of recreative activity as a socializing factor in the life of a sightless individual will be made in the subsequent paragraphs.

From the standpoint of the traditional theory of education, recreation does not generally enter into the school curriculum. But in modern times, recreation occupies a prominent place in an educational programme. The invention of labour-saving and time-saving devices has made for a great deal of leisure for the people in general, and how to make the best use of this surplus time is a matter of considerable importance.

Recreation is no recreation unless it helps creation and the spending of time in sheer idleness has hardly any therapeutic value. Work and recreation must be well

co-ordinated and must help each other. Hence, the timing, duration and the kind of recreation have to be considered in order to draw up a curriculum for recreative activities.

The children without sight are generally taught at residential institutions, particularly in India as there is no class for these pupils in any regular school. It, thus, behoves these institutions to provide for various sorts of recreations for their pupils.

The amusements and hobbies are potent factors in the process of socializing the blind since they bring them in contact with others and make them oblivious of their handicap at least for some time. Different indoor and outdoor games which the sightless pupils enjoy and in which they can participate without any difficulty, should be provided for. Trips and excursions to places of interest should be arranged. These are of immense importance for the blind both from the recreational and educational points of view. Similarly, the attendance at interesting lectures, musical demonstrations, dramatic performances, first-rate talkies, and other entertaining programmes have both avocational and instructional significance.

In this connection, the importance of dramatics as a recreation in schools for the blind should be adequately emphasized. The dramatic shows, staged by blind boys and girls, afford them not only immense entertainment, but also affect them favourably in several other ways. Blindness brings in its train various irksome limitations and cruel restrictions on both physical and mental freedom and opportunities for self-expression are far more restricted among the blind than among the seeing. The participation by the blind in dramatics provides for them one of these opportunities for self-expression. The dramatic show is the surest and the pleasantest method of teaching the blind correct poise and graceful movement,

and these factors add considerably to the social acceptability of sightless individuals. While curveting on the school stage, they may be taught those simple and natural gestures which the seeing learn without effort by merely imitating others. Some blind children are naturally less restricted physically than others ; but most of them must be carefully taught even the most elementary gestures. Lack of gestures, rigidity of the body, and the absence of facial expression have too long been thought the characteristics of the sightless people.

Again, as the child must do his best in the play, so also must he look his best. Thus, pride in his personal appearance may be encouraged. He will soon wish to look well-groomed at all times.

Lastly, the speech defects which are so common among the blind, are expected to be removed to some extent through the participation in these plays. The most important reasons which have been suggested to account for this wide prevalence of defective speech among the blind are the general neuro-muscular tension among them, their practice of carrying on baby talks for a long time due to the indulgence of parents and other relatives, and the effects of illness, accidents or the congenital conditions which are responsible for the loss of vision. For the blind, speech is the most effective passport to social intercourse and it should be improved to as much perfection as possible. In the dramatic shows, the efforts on the part of the pupils to speak in a distinct and graceful way, coupled with the instructions of the coach, work to bring about improvements in speech.

In discussing the problem of avocations and amusements of the blind, it should be remembered that they are under the painful necessity of straining their nerves much more than those with sight for equipping themselves with some amount of education

and for striving to get along in the world which "has been made by the seeing and for the seeing." The question of recreational activities for the blind pupils is, thus, a very vital one, and the school administrators ought to treat it as such.

By way of concluding this topic, a few passages from Dr. R. S. French may be quoted in order to illustrate its importance for blind persons in general. Says he : "Of recreations, and of avocations in general, it holds true that their nature should be such and they should be so suited to the individual needs and the time at the disposal of the individual or group as to secure the most wholesome bodily effects and the greatest humanizing and cheering of the mind. Sports that are a mere prolongation of the day's work, occupations that keep busy the same muscles and involve the same nervous processes, conversations that are gossipy, desultory or 'dirty,' athletics that simply weary, walks that lead nowhere, all are alike deadly, dehumanizing, mechanistic, automatizing, in the worst possible sense... Education for leisure is absolutely imperative both with the young blind and with later blinded adults. No training may be considered complete which leaves out of consideration play and the meanings of play. Every teacher of the blind should be familiar with the psychology and sociology of the subject...On the avocational side we have the place for the larger human outlook, for the idealistic phases of existence, for the drama as a means of emotional 'catharsis,' for the novel, for music as art, and for all forms of art that the blind may enjoy."

To the foregoing four aims of blind education, as laid down by the Committee on Minimal Essentials, a summarized account of which is just concluded, may be added another—the fifth aim, *viz.*, psychological adjustment. It should be

borne in mind that each of these objectives of blind education is dependent on others for its complete effectiveness and none can be fully achieved without being involved in all of them. For instance, the success of academic education of the blind depends largely on their social and psychological adjustment, and this adjustment is, again, a result of an integrated system of liberal education. This intimate interrelationship existing among the various aims of the education of the blind is a fact which one cannot afford to ignore.

The reason for treating the psychological aim as a separate item is that the sightless boys and girls must be psychologically adjusted to their visual handicap before they can be expected to make a satisfactory headway in any one of the other four objectives. Their emotional maladjustments, resulting from their visual deprivation, are sometimes of such magnitude as to warrant their failure to adjust themselves even to the simplest situation. They must be taught how to accept without grudge and self-pity the severe limitations imposed by their blindness and how to make a success of their lives in consonance with their ambitions and abilities despite these cruel barriers and restrictions. They must also be taught not to allow their handicap to handicap themselves in any major way, and this kind of psychological attitude is a sure guarantee to their harmonious adjustment to any situation in which they may find themselves. Besides, blindness is responsible for the frustration of many basic drives of human nature, such as, will to power, will to self-assertion, desire for independence, the sex urge, etc. The visually handicapped persons must be made so strong and resourceful as to be able to find substitutes and sublimations for these repressed urges, and, thus, guard themselves against formidable maladjustments in their lives.

3. Concerning the problems of education and training of the adult blind, the third and the last group of the sightless people under the present discussion, the first point to be noted is that blindness is predominantly an occurrence of advanced age and that the number of sightless adults in every country constitutes at least 75 per cent of the total blind population in that particular geographical area. Despite this outstanding fact, work in behalf of the adult blind is of comparatively recent growth. Johann Wilhelm Klein, the greatest educator of the blind in Austria, to whom attention has already been drawn in the foregoing portion of this article, appears to be the first to plead for the cause of blind adults in the beginning of the nineteenth century; but no serious step in this matter seems to have been taken until about half a century later.

The term "adult" comprises those who are over twenty years of age, and they naturally fall under two distinct groups—those who lost their sight at birth or during the early years of their lives, and those newly-blinded, including the war-blinded persons. The first group may reasonably be assumed to have already adjusted to blindness, while a formidable series of adjustment problems awaits the second. Keeping these two groups in view, their requirements may be considered under three heads: (a) Adjustment; (b) Training; and (c) Employment.

(a) The adjustment of the newly-blinded individuals is a most trying and long-drawn process. When a person is confronted with physical darkness in his adulthood as a result of some disease or accident, he appears to lose his morale completely and to be unable to picture for himself anything but a bleak empty and meaningless existence for the rest of his life. Obviously enough, he is to be redeemed from this depleted state of mind

before any sort of training or rehabilitation may be attempted. The adjustment process ought to be set in motion at a very early stage—from the 'hospital bed, if possible, otherwise, psychological reconversion to normalcy will be hard and protracted and, in some cases, impossible. It is recommended that the sightless persons who are well-adjusted to their handicapped situation, and who have certain achievements to their credit, should be entrusted with the task of ministering to the adjustment needs of the newly-blinded as the personal examples of the former will serve as an inexhaustible source of strength, self-confidence, and inspiration for the latter.

(b) Like adjustment, training is also a difficult matter for the adult blind. The institutions for the blind are more or less exclusively intended for the young blind and do not admit those who are beyond a specified age level. Besides, the combination of higher age and visual handicap makes the requisite standard of training harder to be achieved than in the case of the adolescent blind. Those who were deprived of their sight after completing their training in certain occupations, may have to be re-educated or re-trained for a different vocation as the previous one may not be feasible in view of the visual disability. Endeavours should, however, be made to reinstate them, as far as practicable, to the vocations for which they are already trained.

In the progressive countries of the West, special institutions have been set up for the purpose of imparting training to blind adults in various occupations. In certain cases, training is also provided by the sheltered workshops through the age-old system of apprenticeship. But the most popular and the widespread practice is what is commonly described as "home teaching." Many blind adults are unable to

travel to the institutions or the workshops on account of the transportation difficulties as well as the collateral effects of blindness. Certain Government and the private agencies for the blind send teachers to the homes of these individuals in order to provide instruction in the subjects for which the latter are physically and mentally ready. The usual subjects taught are Braille and the handicrafts, and the blind trainees are provided with this instruction completely free of charge. Like the teachers in blind institutions, the home teachers, before their recruitment, have to go through a period of approved training and to receive their diplomas from the accredited agencies established for this purpose.

It should be remarked that home teaching bears a closer resemblance to social case work than to the regular profession of teaching as it involves all the essentials of social case work, viz., investigation, diagnosis, maintenance of records, and follow-up. The home teacher not only provides instruction in different subjects, but also assists the newly-blinded persons in learning to be blind, physical orientation and in personal and social adjustments. In some instances, he even stays in their homes for days together in order to facilitate their adjustment to blindness within as short a period as possible. Since the introduction of this kind of assistance in England by the Indigent Blind Visiting Society in 1834, and by the Pennsylvania Home Teaching Society and the Free Circulating Library in America in 1882, this social institution has rapidly developed into one of the most powerful factors in the training and adjustment of the adult blind.

There is a heated controversy on the question whether the sightless or the sighted home teachers are more efficient in, and better suited to, their tasks. It is

held that, for certain purposes, *e. g.*, reading out from the printed materials, writing letters, etc., the sighted are preferable, while, for certain other purposes, *e. g.*, teaching Braille, providing encouragement and inspiration through personal examples, better understanding of the requirements of these trainees, etc., the sightless are better equipped. It may be noted that there are more sighted home teachers in Great Britain, while the blind home teachers are preferred in America. In both these countries, however, women have come forward in a much larger number for this profession than men.

It may be mentioned *en passant* that in India very few institutions have arrangements for the training of the adult blind and that there is hardly any sheltered workshop in the strict sense of the term. The home teaching for the blind is conspicuous by its complete absence. These measures have to be adopted without any further delay if the adult blind, who constitute about 90 per cent of the entire sightless population in this country, are to become useful and contributing members of the community.

(c) The economic success of the adult blind is the hardest problem encountered by the workers in their behalf. But unless this problem be tackled successfully, the whole purpose of the training and education of the blind will hardly be of any significance either for the sightless individuals or for the community. Besides, in accordance with the pragmatic definition of social efficiency, as elucidated by Prof. John Dewey and which was cited in the first part of this dissertation, the blind people will never be able to raise themselves from the status of social liabilities unless they are able to support themselves and those dependent on them.

It is indeed a paradox that the seeing people who are, at times, quite generous in subsidizing the educational programmes for the blind, refuse legitimate opportunities to these individuals to put their knowledge and experience into economic usefulness. It should be realized by the community that the visually handicapped persons, if not employed at the end of their training, not only remain as permanent social burdens, but all the money and efforts expended towards their training and education are also thoroughly wasted.

Attention should be called to the fact that an article by the present writer, referred to under 2 (c) of this study, is more or less an exhaustive treatment of all the elements essential to a successful employment programme on behalf of the blind. Those interested in this subject are strongly urged to read this portion of the present discussion in conjunction with that article, since the important points, *viz.*, vocational guidance, vocational instruction, placement, follow-up, etc., stated and elaborated therein, will not be repeated here.

Certain obstacles in the way of a satisfactory vocational adjustment are common both to the seeing and to the sightless, *e. g.*, dearth of economic opportunities, inadequacy of academic and vocational preparation, personality deficiencies, and so on; while, certain other impediments are experienced by the blind alone, *e. g.*, severity of the handicap, *i. e.*, when blindness is accompanied with other physical or mental disabilities, transportation difficulties, labour legislations, etc. The first of these hindrances is quite obvious, and the only ameliorative measure is the elimination of the apparently concomitant factors of blindness. It is, however, necessary to add a few words about the other two hurdles.

It was noted in a previous context that the economic question of the blind



becomes a difficult one if they cannot report to their places of work regularly and punctually. Very few of them earn enough to warrant the expense for a guide for the purpose of escorting them. Even for those who can afford to hire a guide, the expense necessary on this account is rather a heavy charge on their total income. To obviate this financial difficulty and to ensure regular attendance at work by the blind, several steps have been taken.

First, the sightless people have been encouraged to travel alone as soon as possible after the onset of their handicap. They are urged to carry a white cane which has already become a symbol of blindness for the seeing people. This white cane serves as a warning to others about the blind pedestrian and protects him from the hazards and accidents which are likely to result from his unaided travelling. Dr. Thomas Blacklock, the reputed blind poet of England, wrote in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* that "It is better that he (a blind person) should lose a little blood, or even break a bone than be perpetually confined in the same place, debilitated in his frame and depressed in his mind."

Secondly, dogs have been trained to guide the blind most efficiently even in the extremely busy streets. The dog guide movement is only about 30 years old, but within this short time, several thousands of sightless persons have been provided with trained dogs. This technique has brought physical independence within the reach of the blind and has opened up for them new avenues of vocational and recreational activities. For a fuller discussion of this point, the readers are referred to the book, written by the present writer, entitled, "The Blind in India and Abroad," published by the Calcutta University, 1944, pp. 64-67.

Lastly, most of the railway and the bus companies in the advanced Western countries have been persuaded to grant concessions to the blind passengers so that the latter may not be financially handicapped in their business travels. The usual form of this concession is to allow a blind passenger to travel with his guide on the payment of the fare of one ticket only.

Regarding the legislations designed to promote labour welfare, it is ironically true that most of these enactments have gone against the interests of the blind. The employers, as a rule, have been extremely chary of hiring blind labour in view of the Workmen's Compensation Act, the Minimum Wage Act, and the laws governing industrial and social insurance. Some measures have, however, been adopted in some countries to counteract the severity of the operation of these statutes in relation to the blind. For instance, the sightless individuals have been permitted to waive their right to compensation in the event of an injury, and the employers, willing to hire visually handicapped persons, have been granted special licences by which they are legally empowered to pay subminimum wages to these employees. The question which has recently engaged the attention of the workers for the blind is that the employers are too often tempted to take advantage of their blind workers and pay them such low wages as are sure to lead to their pauperization.

It may be observed that the benefits and the advantages, enjoyed by the blind with reference to transportation and labour legislations, just indicated, do not exist in India. In the interests of the blind in this country, the liquidation of the social backwardness in these vitally important matters is long overdue.

As a consequence of the aforesaid facilities and exemptions, the vocational possibilities for the blind have been widened to a considerable extent, though, it must be admitted, the position is yet far from satisfactory. The question is often asked: What kinds of work can the blind do? The occupations in which the sightless persons in the Western countries have been eminently successful, may broadly be grouped under three heads: I. Intellectual professions; II. Musical and allied vocations; and III. Industrial, agricultural and similar occupations.

I. Contrary to the general belief, the intellectually endowed blind individuals have achieved the greatest measure of success in such professions as law, legislation, teaching, journalism, politics, office administration, ministry, and so on. As Dr. Carl Strehl aptly points out, "There is no special type of academic calling for the blind; every blind professional man must demonstrate his own value in order to be appointed and to receive recognition. But here is the real core of the question: There are a number of positions in public or private offices or in the open employment market which could be filled by really competent blind persons. It is essential to give individual guidance in order to put the right man in the right place. It will never do to divide the academically trained blind into a few groups and give them this or that kind of work indiscriminately, but individual guidance will make the most of vocational potentialities....No doubt, that occupation will be best for the blind person which does not make it necessary for him to get into direct contact with the public or clients too often, or which does not demand quick decisions based on information which has to be obtained from written material. Some quiet desk-work which calls for knowledge,

sound judgment, and logical thinking, or a teaching position with no disciplinary responsibility, are the kinds of work for which a blind person is best suited."

Of course, in almost all the intellectual professions, the blind persons require a good deal of sighted assistance. It should, however, be particularly stressed that the use of sighted help is no disqualification on the part of the blind, though it is erroneously regarded as such by a large number of people. To quote Dr. Carl Strehl, again: "Undoubtedly, a blind person is handicapped in the mechanical processes of his work, but often, owing to his well-trained memory and ability to concentrate—numerous instances prove it—he is capable of competing with an efficient seeing person, not only in quality, but also in quantity of work done. The assistant does only what a secretary does for a lawyer, or a nurse for a surgeon. It is needless to say that this statement does not apply to every blind professional man, but on the whole it is correct. It would be desirable if all public and private offices were aware of this." Dr. Strehl recommends, and rightly so, that the sightless professional men should not be made to pay the salaries of their sighted assistants out of their own incomes but that some publicly endowed fund or the organizations hiring their services should take the responsibility for these additional expenses imposed solely by the lack of vision.

II. 'It is wrongly supposed by many that the blind people have a natural gift for music, and this belief on the part of several school administrators is responsible for assigning to music classes those who can never make a successful career in music. There is no necessary relationship between visual disability and musical talent. It is, however, undeniable that, to those who are innately gifted in music, this

vocation offers less handicap than most of the other professions. Since the days of Homer, who was himself sightless, music has been the most favourite career with the blind, and those who have talent for it ought to be encouraged to specialize in this vocation.

III. The majority of blind persons are engaged in these occupations. Many laws have been passed in the Western countries to protect the blind workers against seeing competition. In America, the Randolph-Sheppard Act of 1935 has granted to the blind the exclusive right to operate vending stands in the federal and other public buildings; while, the Wagner-O'Day Act of 1938 requires the Federal and State Government offices to purchase the products manufactured by the blind. These two laws have protected the American blind from the sighted competition and have provided the opportunities for gainful employment to thousands of them. Similarly, in Japan, the professions of massage and acupuncture have been more or less entirely restricted to persons without sight. As a result, there is hardly any unemployment among the blind in that country. This was, of course, true of Japan before the last great war. The present position in this matter cannot, however, be definitely ascertained.

The sighted employers are usually reluctant to employ physically handicapped persons, though the latter might be in possession of adequate training and experience. Some countries have adopted legal measures to compel these employers to hire handicapped labour. For instance, before the last war, the German factories were required to hire a certain percentage of physically disabled workers. Last year, the British Parliament passed the Disabled Persons Act, compelling the British industrial establishments to engage an allotted

portion of physically infirm individuals. The blind are, of course, included in all these statutory enactments.

Since the problem of employment and rehabilitation of the blind is a challenge to all concerned, both the Government and the private agencies in many countries have put forth their utmost efforts to achieve a conquest over this difficulty. One of the most important functions of the State Commissions for the Blind in America is to carry on vigorous placement activities on behalf of the trained blind, and the similar task has been entrusted to the County Councils in Great Britain by virtue of the Blind Persons Act of 1920. A Federal Act, passed in America in 1920, has required all the State Governments to set up special departments with a view to promote vocational rehabilitation of physically disabled persons, and the annual federal appropriation for this purpose is \$1,938,000. To supplement these Government endeavours, several private organizations have established placement departments for solving the employment problem of the blind and other physically handicapped individuals.

Despite all these Government and private efforts to place the blind, many persons fail to secure positions in general industrial and commercial establishments either for the lack of suitable opportunities or for some other physical or mental deficiencies on the part of these individuals in addition to their visual handicap. It is a truism that, in ordinary competitive industry, the physically handicapped persons are "the last to be hired" and "the first to be fired." In order to remedy this state of affairs, many special factories, known as "sheltered workshops", have been set up, where the blind can carry on their work with comparative ease and greater sense of security. In America, the

National Recovery Act of 1935 defines a sheltered workshop as "A charitable institution or activities thereof, conducted not for profit, but for the purpose of providing remunerative employment for physically, mentally, or socially handicapped workers." The handicapped individuals are paid according to their productive capacity, and those whose earnings fail to reach the accepted minimum standard of living, are compensated with additional money in the form of augmentation of wages. Owing to the payment of these financial benefits as well as slow and inefficient production, almost every sheltered workshop has to be subsidized in varying degrees, rising as high as to 50 per cent of its total expenditure in some cases.

Those who are too old or are too severely handicapped to travel to a sheltered workshop everyday, are provided with employment under what is known as "home workers' scheme." The State Commissions for the Blind in America and the County Councils in Great Britain send the required tools and materials to the homes of these persons and take the responsibility of marketing the products made by these home workers. The cost of materials is deducted from the sale proceeds and the balance is given to these homebound people as wages. In this case, the income of a blind person is augmented in order to bring it up to the approved minimum standard.

In closing this brief discussion of the economic opportunities for the blind, attention may be drawn to a list of 45 occupations which the war-blinded persons of Great Britain have followed successfully. This list which is both interesting and instructive and which appeared in the "St. Dunstan's Review" for September, 1946, is as follows: Doctor; masseur; osteopath; parson; solicitor; barrister; director of companies; poultry farmer;

boot-repairer; joiner; handicrafts; public affairs; shopkeeper; merchant; secretary; labour officer; actor; welfare officer; author; journalist; newspaper proprietor; telephonist; social service; research chemist; research worker; upholsterer; salesman; insurance; blind welfare; schoolmaster; lecturer; lecturer in law; Members of Parliament; bookmaker; fisherman; chartered accountant; transport executive; surveyor; dog breeder; baker; missionary; singer; boarding-house keeper; engineering; farmer and horse breeder.

The preparation of such a catalogue of the occupations in which the Indian blind are engaged, will surely be of immense value and interest. It is quite apparent to all that neither the Government nor the people of this country have paid any serious attention to the acute problem of the vocational adjustment of the blind. The inevitable result has been that the overwhelming majority of this afflicted section of humanity have resorted to mendicancy—open or disguised. This has not only dehumanized them beyond recognition, but it has also held back the social and economic progress of the community as a whole.

A pertinent question may be raised here: What has been the net-result of the employment situation of the blind in the Western countries as a consequence of the aforesaid strenuous official and non-official measures in this behalf? The unequivocal answer must be that the result has not yet been very encouraging in terms of either range or numerical strength. In America, where more organized efforts have been made to place the blind than in any other country, not more than 15-20 per cent of the sightless population have been able to become fully self-supporting and that at least 40 per cent of them live on public relief. It must be admitted without reservation that a system of relief

or dole—Government or private, sheltered factories, augmentation of wages, charitable homes, or any measure of this description militates against the concept of social efficiency.

There are, however, many factors which indicate that the position is not so hopeless as it appears to be to a casual observer. Some of these factors are :

- (i) The blind or the physically handicapped in general are not the only recipients of relief or dole, or the inmates of charitable homes. As a matter of fact, the number of physically normal persons who are on public relief, is much greater than that of the blind. From the pragmatic point of view, these normal people are also social liabilities. Those sightless individuals who still live as burdens on society do not surely deserve as much pity, contempt and condemnation as has been their share, since a much larger number of the seeing people do not have any better record to their credit.
- (ii) In almost every country, about 50 per cent of the total blind population is over the age of 50. Old age by itself is a recognized cause of economic maladjustment, which is proved by the existence of the old age pension in several countries. When blindness is added to old age or *vice versa*, the effects of blindness or of old age are naturally accentuated to a greater degree. If the seeing old men fail to achieve social efficiency, it is too much to expect the sightless old people to do so. It is, therefore, not fair to take these persons
- into account when computing the percentage of self-supporting blind individuals. If the sightless old persons are left out of consideration, the proportion of the gainfully employed blind mounts up much higher than what has been stated in a foregoing paragraph.
- (iii) A large section of the blind is prevented from active participation in economic life due not so much to visual disability as to the combination of this handicap with some other physical or mental deprivation. It is expected that, in future, science and medicine will succeed in isolating and controlling these accompanying afflictions with increased effectiveness, and this will *ipso facto* swell the number of the employable and the employed blind.
- (iv) The systematic work with the blind is only about 150 years old, and it cannot be reasonably expected that human ingenuity should have finished devising all the techniques and methods for making these persons socially efficient in the course of such a short time. If so many thousands of years could not transform all the seeing individuals into social assets, it is idle to grieve over the fact that several blind persons have not yet succeeded in achieving the normal economic and social status. The best thing to do is to continue the ameliorative programmes in their behalf with greater ardour and earnestness, making full use of the better

methods, techniques and appliances 'which will be devised with the passage of time.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the blind can and will never attain a complete social and economic adjustment until and unless there is a wholesome public attitude towards them. They constitute a small minority in every community and their fate, like that of any other minority group, is largely dependent on the ideas and dispositions of the majority. Unfortunately, the seeing people, by and large, have very poor and fantastic notions about the needs and abilities of the blind. As has been rightly remarked by Mr. Clarence Hawkes, a distinguished sightless author in America, "There is probably no abnormal condition of life so little understood and appreciated and about which so much that is erroneous has been written as blindness. The very conditions under which the blind live are so extreme and startling that there has gradually been built up about them a world of fairy stories." It is undoubtedly true that the blind suffer more from the illogical and ill-conceived attitudes towards them than from their own physical handicap. In other words, the source of conflict for them is not the physical fact of being without sight, but the psychological fact of being treated as a person without sight. The seeing people, as a rule, have a fairly large number of preconceptions about the blind, and most of these are erroneous, being based on inadequate knowledge, prejudice or imagination. It is not possible to enumerate all these presuppositions here, but only a few of them are set forth in the following paragraphs :

- (i) Psychologically, the public in general consider the blind as queer people—having a menta-

lity and a personality entirely different from theirs. The people without sight, are regarded as living in a world of thoughts, ideas and emotions where the sighted persons cannot enter and have nothing in common. As M. Pierre Villey puts it, "The man who sees, judges the blind, not by what they are, but by the fear with which blindness inspires him." This attitude of the public or the employers towards the blind is not certainly conducive to the solution of the vocational problem of the latter. The fact is that the personality of a sightless individual does not differ in any way from that of a seeing person. He should be regarded as a seeing person in the dark. Just as a seeing person makes certain changes in his behaviour pattern to adjust himself to the total absence of light at night, so does a blind man during the whole of his life. Surely, a seeing person cannot be regarded as having two personalities—one during the day and the other at night.

- (ii) The people without sight are most often thought to constitute a class by themselves and are treated as such. But nothing is farther from the truth than this. The blind differ from one another in many more ways than the seeing persons do. This is due to the fact that the visually handicapped people differ from one another in the amount of vision retained, the age when vision was lost, and

the causes thereof. When closely analysed, it is found that these factors give rise to important psychological, social and intellectual divergences among the blind. The ignorance of this truth has done great harm to the cause of the blind and has stood in the way of their material and spiritual amelioration. It should be remembered that there are competent blind as well as infirm blind, aged blind, lazy blind, and so on, and their intellectual and manual turn-outs should not be judged on the principle that "All cows are black in the dark." For some mysterious reasons, it happens that the public are more influenced by the worse type of the blind than by the better, and the result is too well known to need reiteration.

- (iii) Very often, the blind are considered as not only physically handicapped but also mentally deficient. Their physical helplessness is, through some unknown process of logic, attributed to their emotional and intellectual life as well. Two interesting results follow from this attitude of the seeing people : First, the opinions and the statements of the blind are not given the same attention and consideration as those of the seeing of comparable age. Secondly, the seeing people usually prefer to talk to the blind indirectly, i. e., through their companions or guides. The idea behind this peculiar

mode of behaviour seems to be that they feel that the blind may not properly comprehend what they are talking about. This gives rise to many questions asked to the companions or guides of the blind in the presence and within the hearing of the blind. For instance, "Don't you see at all" takes the form of "Doesn't he see at all?" "What is your profession" takes the form of "What is his profession," etc. In other words, from the grammatical standpoint, all the second persons become the third persons when the seeing people intend to talk to the blind, provided the latter have someone with them. If the blind are alone, they are usually ignored and are not considered important enough to have a discussion with.

A classic example of this custom of indirect talking to the blind is provided by the following incident : The aunt of a blinded soldier in England asked his sighted wife, "Does he take sugar in his tea?" The reply of the wife was, "He does and he talks, too, aunt Emmeline, and he isn't deaf, and he really won't bite! So, it's quite safe to ask him direct." Surely, the blind officer knew and could reply as to whether it was his practice to take sugar in his tea.

- (iv) The seeing people stresses the importance of the visual aspects of their life to such a

great extent that they very often fail to distinguish between the responses dependent on vision and those aroused by other senses or emotions. This is apparent from the various queries they put to the blind. Here are a few samples of them : A blind student was asked, " Since you cannot see, how do you know that you are awake ?" The present writer was put on his trial with the question, " As you do not see, how do you know that you are hungry ?" Another blind person was confronted with the question, " How do you locate your mouth when you eat ?" It is difficult to see how those seeing persons will agree to provide employment to a blind man when the latter is assumed even to be unable to know that he is awake or that he is hungry.

- (v) It is widely believed that the blind individuals are extremely sad for their loss of sight. This is entirely erroneous. If they are satisfactorily adjusted to their social and vocational life, they do not suffer from any anguish for their inability to see the beauties of nature or the faces of their near and dear ones. When asked if he would like to have his sight back, a blind person replied that he would rather have a pair of long arms which would reach the moon so that he would be able to explore numerous objects with his tactual sensations. The statement

made by a sighted writer that " The blind miss their sight as we miss our wings " is not very far from correct. It may be noted that the blind persons are usually full of cheer and good humour. They cannot, of course, be always gay when they are starved or are frustrated owing to the wrong attitudes of the seeing people around them.

How to behave normally with the blind is a matter which should be properly understood by all having to deal with them. The following three principles regarding the correct attitude towards the blind may be considered :

- (i) One should place himself in the position of a blind person when dealing with him. He certainly does not wish to be regarded either as abnormal or subnormal, but desires to be accepted as a normal human being. He does not want pity but consideration.
- (ii) Blindness should be treated as a mere inconvenience and not a tragedy—as a mere incident and not a disaster. It should be ignored and totally forgotten as long as this does not lead to the discomfort or an injury to the sightless person himself or to others. A blind person has precisely stated that " A friend is not one who will back us up to a chair and bend our knees, but rather a person who will make us forget that we were blind."
- (iii) Kindness is not always " doubly-blest " as held by



Shakespeare. It is a paradox that kindness always helps the giver, but not the receiver. When one is kind to a blind person, he should carefully determine what his kindness does to the personality of the latter. Respect for personality, and not charity, philanthropy, pity or patronage, should be the basis of his behaviour towards the blind. It is sometimes believed that one is kind to the blind when he does not assign any responsible work to them. This is a wrong judgment as the sight-

less people feel happy when they are entrusted with responsibilities along with their sighted compatriots. As rightly pointed out by a blind French physician : "So long as the blind can still bring their stone, however small it may be, to the building of civilization or bring happiness to their kind, they feel that they live ; and, whatever be the wounds received, they are not out of the battle of life—the inequality of arms only increases their ardour."

# TOWARDS INDUSTRIAL PEACE

B. CHATTERJI

There is a constant conflict between employers and employees as to what their rights are. This conflict can be minimised or prevented only by curbing the activities of the two opposing forces. If industrial peace is a goal of a democratic society, then, it follows that the enactment of labour laws, with adequate machinery for their enforcement, can make a valuable contribution in that direction. This article has attempted to give a picture of the measures adopted for minimising, as far as possible, the evil effects of the conflicts between these two interest groups.

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The volcanic eruption of industrial unrest, almost simultaneously, throughout the world has puzzled politicians, social thinkers, employers and laymen alike. Though, apparently, it appears to be a direct result of the wartime to peacetime transition of the social order, its implications have a deeper social, political and economic significance.

Since the advent of the industrial revolution and subsequent advance of Marxian philosophy, the social existence of man has been classified as between haves and have-nots, exploiter and exploited, labour and capital. The conflict between these antagonistic forces manifests itself in strikes, lock outs and other types of industrial disputes. This declaration of class war means loss of wages, hunger and all its attendant misery and suffering to the striker, financial loss to the employer, reduced sale to the shopkeeper, extra worry to those in charge of law and order, excitement and inconvenience to the general public and huge economic loss to the nation. But, in spite of these hardships and sufferings, strikes have been viewed rather leniently and with a spirit of tolerance by the community. Such an attitude has developed from the belief that they are the only means to secure the redress of grievances and modifications in the existing appalling condition of labour.

Moreover, the allegation that a worker strikes work merely for the fun of it, is without foundation. He works in order

to earn an income, and this is interrupted when he joins a strike. Perhaps, to an irresponsible youth—tired of the drab monotony of a factory—strikes may afford some relaxation and excitement; but an average worker with family responsibilities is sobered by the thought of mounting and progressive miseries. Therefore, he strikes work when he feels, or is made to feel, that he has grievances besides which these sufferings and privations pale into insignificance. And with regard to the legality of such a step, it is argued that a person, howsoever humble, has a right to offer his services at any price and condition he chooses—and strike is the only weapon to secure this end. By outlawing strikes, the position of a worker is reduced to that of a slave. And some protagonists of the working class feel that to force industrial peace through legislation under the existing labour conditions is to force a slave to retain his slavery.

An analysis of the various causes of industrial unrest would better equip us to understand the problem.

In the present day inflated national economy, the primary cause of strikes remains economic. It is a fact that there is a vicious circle woven round higher prices and wages in which wages remain under perpetual handicap. The disparity between prices and wages is such that dearness allowances and other bonuses are unable to bridge the gap. It is also argued that wage rise tends by itself to create an

inflationary force; as such, a price-stop could only be obtained by a wage-stop. This argument, though valid, has little force in existing conditions in India, where stabilized price level of commodities on which the cost of living is based is conspicuous by its absence. Then again, prewar wages in India were lower than minimum requirements of living; and they varied widely not only from place to place and from industry to industry, but even from one industrial unit to another in the same industry. The illogical trend of wages was pointed out by the Labour Ministers during their third conference. They remarked that "the movement in wages has been on the whole unplanned and has followed different lines in different industries and different centres." This situation has given the longest handle to all trade union workers for a class conflict.

Thus the problem of minimum wage fixation is two-fold—firstly, at what point should the minimum wage level be fixed; and, secondly, the machinery for such a minimum wage fixation. The first question would also involve the fixation of a national minimum wage. According to Dr. Radhakamal Mukerjee, while fixing such a level, three factors are to be reckoned with, viz.,

- (1) Minimum needs of the worker regarding "health, efficiency and general well-being,"
- (2) A tendency towards equality of wages offered to workers in different occupations, and
- (3) The capacity of industry to afford such a minimum.

And as regards the machinery to enforce such wages, Dr. Mukerjee suggests the establishment of "Wage Boards" with representatives of employers and employees, as in Great Britain and other industrial countries. All the same, one must bear in mind the Congress Working Commi-

ttee's resolution on labour strikes, which says that "no lasting solution of these difficulties will be available so long as a definite policy regarding a future price structure does not shape and an orderly and just basis is not provided for the economic relations in the country." It is, therefore, essential to plan Indian economy in such a fashion that the transition from wartime to peacetime economy may be smooth. Moreover, the worker must be made to realize the fact that the loss in production due to strikes goes to intensify the existing inflationary tendency.

There is yet another economic cause of strikes, which is the spreading belief—and to some extent rightly—that labour is the most fundamental factor in the creation of values and prices. The workers feel that there is no effective ceiling for the profit-mania of the capitalists. Why then, they argue, should the poor worker be expected to limit his demands? The excess profit tax was a move in the direction of checking profit. But this succeeded only partially. Perhaps, death duties added to the excess profit tax will bring profits and capitalistic tendencies under the effective control of the State. There is no denying the fact that wages and profits should be both subject to Governmental control.

Political causes of strikes emanate from the inspiration provided by the Marxian philosophy believing in the inevitability of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the establishment of the workers' state. The present policy adopted by labour leaders leads one to the conclusion that their objective is not only to secure a decent living standard related to the national economy, but also to capture political power and then fashion a social order of their liking. No one can doubt the need for a just and equitable, social, political and economic order, but the

question is the practicability of such a workers' state. The real proletariat of India is the landless agriculturists who outnumber the industrial workers overwhelmingly. It will, therefore, be unwise and unjust to tolerate any move by industrial labour leaders towards the fulfilment of their objective. For, it will mean subjecting the interest of an important majority to a minority of industrial workers just because the latter happen to be organized and vocal. It will not be communism, but its antithesis, fascism. This tendency has got to be met squarely by our national leaders.

Another political cause of industrial strikes lies in the fact that India is emerging from an era of political dependence to that of independence. In the Indian working class, an ambitious politician finds the right material to give him an organized following which could be exploited for serving his political purposes. What is true of individuals, in this case, is true of political parties as well.

In short, a large number of political strikes are symptomatic of the political unrest in the country. The conflict of political ideologies recoils on the labour group, when mass support for such ideologies is sought to be established. This political exploitation of the worker is possible due to their abysmal ignorance, illiteracy and lack of education. Here, the primary consideration of economic functions of trade unionism gives way to political influence at the cost of the larger interests of the worker. In most cases, this type of agitational leadership comes from outside the industry—a fact which unnecessarily gives scope for the employer to get prejudiced.

Lastly, strikes are also due to the maladjustments in the relationship between

the employer and employees. Differences of opinion on matters regarding retrenchment, conditions of work, hours of work, victimization, maintenance of war-time gains and benefits, etc., lead to strikes. These causes also are such that they can only be remedied by legislative measures.

To sum up these causes of strikes, we can do no better than to reflect Prof. Pigou's opinion: "Disputes arise because of the existence of a margin of indeterminateness in the settlement of all exchanges or bargains. If under given conditions there was a fixed point at which alone a particular bargain could be settled, and if further both the parties to the bargain knew the existence of such a point and its exact location, no dispute could arise."<sup>1</sup> But the problem of industrial conflicts is a result of many fundamental socio-economic and political causes, and it is too much to expect that it could be made to resolve into certain fixed points at which disputes could be settled. What could be done is to narrow down the margin of indeterminate quantities which is likely to result in a dispute.

When we consider the question of preventing labour disputes, our mind is necessarily drawn towards the etiology of previous strikes. During the period from 1921 to 1942, there were no less than 5353 stoppages of work in India, out of which only 794 yielded desired results or were successful. In other words, only about 14.8 per cent were successful, whereas 85.2 per cent were unsuccessful. It is quite possible that employers are in a more fortunate position to stand the test of collective bargaining, or it is also possible that labour organizations were weak, or leadership irresponsible. From January to September 1946, there

1. As quoted by *The Eastern Economist*, p. 849 (June 22nd, 1945).

were in all 1435 stoppages. No responsible Government can ignore the serious loss to national production in such an irresponsible fashion. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of Government to interfere, in a just and equitable manner, with the liberty of labourers and the licence of capitalists, making use of all weapons in its armoury. Legislation is the most effective one among them. Let us, therefore, review the various legislative enactments, both central and provincial, in order to assess its success.

The first piece of Central Legislation was the Trade Disputes Act of 1929. This Act provided for the setting up of *ad hoc* inquiry committees to deal with specific matters referred to them. Similarly, is provided for the establishment of a board of conciliation, primarily with a view to enlighten the public regarding the merits of a trade dispute. The Act also provided details regarding the manner in which strikes in certain public utility services may be declared. But what constituted public utility services were left for the Government to decide. Further, the Act made provision for penalizing strikes without due notice as also those that were not specifically in furtherance of a trade dispute. The Act has been a failure from many points of view. For, although, the power to appoint a board of conciliation in cases of dispute rests, theoretically, with the Government, yet, the clause is only optional. Hence, it affords scope for non-settlement or non-conciliation of many strikes, which might otherwise have ended amicably. Then again, the provisions of the Act can be set in motion only after a strike has occurred. This is unfortunate in view of the fact that attempts at conciliation are likely to have greater chances of settlement at earlier stages of the dispute.

Provision regarding amicable conciliation, during the period of giving notice for and actual strike of work, are also lacking.

To remedy these defects, a progressive step was taken by the Government of Bombay, which enacted the Bombay Trade Disputes Act in 1934. An important feature of this Act was the provision for the appointment of a labour officer—a Government servant—to hear grievances of workers and to represent them to employers. It also provided for the appointment of a chief conciliator to hear cases which the labour officer was unable to settle. These provisions, i. e., of taking recourse to a labour officer or chief conciliator, were purely voluntary. There was no scope for arbitration and adjudication of labour disputes. Similarly, no preventive measures were provided for. There was no check against making unwarranted changes and no machinery for compulsory conciliation or negotiations. So, whenever a change in the industrial condition detrimental to workers was introduced, they resorted to strike at the first instance.

Being keenly alive to these shortcomings, the Congress Ministry in Bombay enacted the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act (1938) to remedy the shortcomings of the previous legislation on the subject. The Act came into operation from May the 1st, 1939. This Act defines terms such as "industrial matter," "change" and "industrial dispute." It lays down that certain industrial procedures should be crystallized into what are termed as "standing orders." Once the standing orders are finalized, no change in them, as also in certain other industrial matters mentioned in a schedule, can be effected without negotiations. In case the negotiations break down, conciliation was the alternative. It is obligatory for both parties

to go through this procedure before effecting or desiring a change. If a settlement is thus reached, then it is registered, failing which the parties are at liberty to resort to action. The Government, however, has power to refer the dispute to a board of conciliators, provided both the parties agree to this suggestion. In case no settlement is reached through this means, the parties are free to go their own way. The Act also provides for arbitration and establishment of an industrial court. Though arbitration was voluntary, by an amendment the Government has the right to refer, any dispute to arbitration, if a serious breach of the peace is expected, or if it is likely to cause prolonged hardship or affect the scope of employment.

It must be mentioned at this juncture, that the Act has recognized trade unions as under three distinct types:—

(i) Representative, having 25 per cent of the total number of employees on its membership rolls; (ii) Qualified, having 5 per cent of employees on its membership rolls; and (iii) Registered, having either 25 per cent of employees on its rolls or recognized by the employer and has 5 per cent of the employees on its rolls. Though arbitration is voluntary, yet, by mutual agreement between an employer and a registered union, the parties may agree to submit all their present or future disputes to arbitration. In most cases, the industrial court is the arbitrator, though a private individual can also be appointed by mutual consent. The decision of the arbitrator is final and irrevocable, except in cases of arbitration by a private individual, in which case it may be challenged on grounds on which an ordinary award is liable to be challenged in a civil court under civil code procedure. The award can, however, be revoked after six months

of its publication, should one of the two parties so desire.

The industrial court has functions as an original court to hear all applications filed for declaration of illegal strikes and lock-outs and changes. And it has also jurisdiction as a court of appeal, review and arbitration.

The Act also penalized illegal strikes and lock-outs, and also illegal changes.

During the period between May, 1939, and November, 1943, 443 applications were filed before the industrial court. Out of these, 77 per cent were made by workers for declaring changes made by employers illegal and 14 per cent related to declaring strikes by employees illegal.

Though the Act worked in a generally satisfactory manner, there are certain flaws which needed to be remedied. Therefore, within a few months of their assuming power for the second time, the Congress Ministry took up the question of revising it, with a view not only to remedy its defects, but also to promote labour welfare. The Bombay Industrial Relations Bill was adopted, in October, 1946. It created an unprecedented stir among representatives of capital and labour in the Assembly, and no less than 337 amendments were moved; but the Bill was adopted without either going through a select committee or any far reaching change in the original draft moved by the Labour Minister. The Bill received the assent of the Governor General on April the 9th, 1947, and will now be shortly promulgated in the Bombay Province.

As against the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, the recently passed Industrial Relations Act has introduced the

following changes in the light of experience and expedience:—

1. Compulsory conciliation proceedings, in cases of disputes not referred to arbitration, remains substantially the same, with a minor change that substitutes for a notice of change are recognized and that conciliation proceedings must now be completed within three months instead of four months.

2. The amendment of 1941 to the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act has been incorporated in sections 72 and 73 of the new Act, whereby the Provincial Government is empowered to refer any industrial dispute to arbitration of the industrial court, if, on the report of the labour officer or otherwise, the Government is satisfied that the continuance of the dispute may lead to serious breach of the peace, prolonged hardship to a large section of the community, serious affliction to the industry or curtailment of the scope for employment, and in case the dispute is not likely to be settled by any other means, or it becomes necessary in public interest.

3. The Act also provides for the establishment of labour courts (Sections 77—88) having ordinary and special jurisdiction in local areas for which they are constituted. In exercise of its ordinary jurisdiction, the labour court has powers to decide disputes regarding

- (i) propriety or legality of an order passed by an employer,
- (ii) application and interpretation of standing orders, and
- (iii) changes made by employer or desired by an employee on certain industrial matters.

It has also powers to decide industrial disputes referred to it for arbitration and to

declare the legality or otherwise of a strike, lock out or a change.' The courts have also requisite powers to enforce their decisions in the above matters. The industrial court hears appeals from and supervises over the labour courts. Strikes and lock outs will be illegal as laid down earlier by the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act.

A strike shall be illegal if it is commenced or continued.

- (i) when it relates to any industrial matter regulated by any standing order;
- (ii) without giving notice as laid down in Section 42;
- (iii) simply because an employer has not carried out the provisions of the standing order or has introduced an illegal change;
- (iv) in cases where they are resorted to before conciliation has been resorted to;
- (v) before the completion of conciliation proceedings;
- (vi) in cases where a special intimation has been sent repudiating propriety of a joint agreement—Section 51 (2)—to the conciliator, before the receipt of the intimation by the party concerned;
- (vii) in all cases where employers and employees have agreed to refer disputes between them to arbitration, unless the agreement is lawfully revoked;
- (viii) in such cases, when a dispute is referred to arbitration, before completion of proceedings of arbitration of the industrial (or labour) court or before the date on which its decision comes into operation.

(ix) in contravention of a registered agreement, settlement or award, and

(x) if resorted to after expiry of two months of the completion of conciliation proceedings.

A lock out is similarly deemed to be illegal, due to all the above reasons except (iii).

4. The penalties for illegal strikes have been reduced from Rs. 25/- plus Rs. 1-4-0 per day (according to the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act) to Rs. 10/- plus Re. 1-0-0 per day. But in cases of illegal lock outs the fine has been increased from Rs. 2,500/- plus Rs. 200/- per day to Rs. 2,500/- plus Rs. 5,000/- per day. It has also provided that in cases of strikes or lock outs, resorted to after due notice, and where they are declared illegal by an industrial (or labour) court, no penalties are to be incurred if work is resumed within 48 hours of such declaration.

5. *Recognition of trade unions.*—The Act changes the classification of different types of unions laid down by the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act.

“Registered Unions” are those unions having a membership of not less than 15 per cent of the total number of employees in an industry, as against the 25 per cent requirement of the previous Act. Similarly, “Qualified Unions” now will be those that have not less than 5 per cent of the total number of employees in an industry. And, “Approved Unions” will be those that have not less than 15 per cent membership of the total number of employees in a single undertaking and apply for registration as a “Primary Union” in the absence of any of the above two types

of unions. In all the above cases, the requisite percentages should have been maintained for three months next preceding, instead of six months as laid down by the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act. It is important to note that only one union can now be registered at a time in order of preference among Registered, Qualified and Primary Unions. In cases of two or more unions being eligible for registration, the one with a larger membership is to be registered in all cases. All these unions have certain privileges and obligations to be fulfilled in the interest of industrial harmony and healthy growth of the trade union movement.

6. The Industrial Relations Act has made provisions for appointing joint committees and courts of enquiry. Further, it has enlarged and defined the powers of the Labour Officer.

In places where there are registered Unions, the employer and employees may set up a joint committee with equal number of members representing the management and the union for ironing out day-to-day hitches without resorting to the elaborate proceedings of negotiation, conciliation and so on. The committee members would, no doubt, promote better understanding of mutual difficulties and hardships; and close contact between two conflicting groups under amiable conditions would lead to harmony. The courts of enquiry can be appointed under the provisions of Section 101 of the Act to enquire into such matters pertaining to labour conditions or industrial relations as the Provincial Government may deem fit. It can also refer any aspect of an industrial dispute to a court of enquiry for findings. The proceedings before this court shall be deemed to be judicial.



7. The labour officer has been empowered by the new Act (Section 34), to enter and inspect any place used for an industry, office of any union, premises of employees provided by the employer, and to call for documents which he may deem fit for the discharge of his duties under the Act. He is also empowered to convene a meeting of employees on the premises where they are employed. He is entitled to appear in any proceeding under the Act and it is also his duty (a) to watch the interests of employees and promote harmonious relations between employers and employees, (b) to investigate grievances of employees and represent them to employers and make recommendations for their redress, and (c) to report to the Provincial Government the existence of any industrial dispute of which no notice of change has been given. This clarification of the delicate position of the labour officer will go a long way to make him a useful person in helping both the employers and employees in the maintenance of industrial harmony.

8. Another new feature of the Industrial Relations Act is the maintenance, by the Provincial Government of a record of conditions of work, usages and conventions in each undertaking as a compulsory measure. The Government may also hold enquiry for obtaining or verifying such information, and the proceedings of such an enquiry shall be deemed to be judicial.

9. The Act also provides for annual election of employees' representatives, thus dispensing with the old system of electing representatives for a particular dispute only.

While it is true that harmony should be substituted for conflict, and judicial machinery for industrial warfare, one must not overlook the assumption that the State is

not always impartial, and that big capitalists are likely to have some pull with those who happen to be in power. On the other hand, a reduced number of strikes can never be an index of greater social justice. Fascist countries crushed the free organization of workers, but, thereby, no one had any illusions about the condition of working classes in those countries. We, in India, need not be sceptic of the State being partial to capitalists. We are living in an era of popular Governments and it is the people's judicious will that is bound to influence the policy of Governments, if they mean to continue smoothly. This fear of the State being partial to capitalists can, under the present circumstances, be counteracted by strong organizations of workers. It is, however, equally incumbent upon them not to be misguided by individuals or political parties prompted by ulterior motives. The working classes have suffered much by capitalistic exploitation and they ought to be on guard against the political exploitation of their conditions.

No one is under an illusion that this wave of class conflict and industrial warfare could be wiped off by the magic wand of legislation alone. As has been already enumerated, a permanent or relatively permanent solution could be found only by tackling basic economic and social questions involved therein. Throughout the country, a chain of wage-boards need to be established who would ensure a decent living wage to all workers. They should also give uniform wages in the same industry or to workers in similar undertakings at a particular place. It is also necessary that the Government should make all possible efforts to stabilize prices on food and articles of daily necessity. Thus alone the wages could be kept under control. On the other hand, taxation of high indus-

trial profits should also be considered along with imposition of heavy death duties.

The employer-employee relationship should be improved through the liaison work of a trained personnel officer. Among other measures, the present writer would suggest compulsory labour welfare programmes under the control of Government in every industrial undertaking on the lines of the Central Coal Mines Welfare Committee, and a generous sharing of profits through distribution of dividend or ordinary bonus to workers. Similarly, workers should be given security against

unemployment, ill health, etc., by the Government. And, last but not least, they should have a real share in the determination of such industrial policies as are likely to affect them directly. This will promote mutual understanding and also give them a sense of partnership in a useful community. If these progressive measures are coupled with an industrial relations act of the kind introduced in Bombay, we can safely hope for a new era in industrial relations, wherein a new conception of human values, rights and social justice would lead to the happiness and prosperity of the nation.

# DOMESTIC SERVANTS IN BOMBAY

MISS J. G. KHANDERIA

Domestic service is an unregulated occupation needing urgent reform. Due to its unorganised character, the domestic servant is not in a position to formulate and enforce his demands by collective bargaining. The author is of the opinion that a reasonable wage permitting a decent standard of life, good housing, some opportunities for education and social life, and a strong trade union organisation are necessary to give him a status similar to that of the industrial worker.

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Domestic servants form one of the major occupational groups. According to the census report of 1941, there are 12,674,000 persons following domestic service in the whole of India. In Bombay itself, there are 40,297 domestic servants, out of which 6,180 are females. The origin of domestic service can be traced to 3000 B. C. when the Aryans invaded India and the Anaryas were made to do all the manual work. Later they were absorbed into society by the formation of the four Varnas -- Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras -- the Sudras doing the lower type of manual work of the three higher Varnas. But the most heinous form of domestic service existed in ancient Greece and Rome, in the sixth and seventh centuries B. C., in the form of slavery. In the feudal organization of society in medieval Europe, the counterpart of slavery was serfdom. Thus, throughout the past ages, domestic service always existed in one form or another. Urbanization and the growth of cities were chiefly responsible for the emergence of this class as a distinct wage-earning group, so that today it seems to have become an essential part of our civilization. There is no exaggeration in calling it an essential utility service like the water supply or the post. It is a problem of every household.

The following is a study of 75 male whole-time servants in the city of Bombay. It is inevitably a study of rural-urban trends as almost all domestic servants

come from rural areas to Bombay. Of the 75 studied, 55 come from Konkan, 3 from Thana district, 7 from Gujarat, 3 from Goa, 2 from Kathiawar, 2 from Travancore, and 1 each from Cutch, Hyderabad (Dn.), and United Provinces. The factors motivating migration are the push from the old place and the pull to the new one. The push from the old place is affected considerably by economic factors. Difficulty in finding an adequate livelihood in one's native place impels the villager to Bombay. Almost all the domestic servants studied had an agricultural background; 44 had their own plots of land and 20 had some connection or the other with land. We found that usually one member of the family, either the father or the elder brother, stays behind in the village to look after the land, while the younger members proceed to the city in search of work. Also, we came across many domestic servants who invariably return to the village during the agricultural season. Absence of any subsidiary occupation to agriculture, indebtedness, social and family disorganization, and the death of one or both of the parents are other contributory factors to the push from the village. Coming to the pull to the city, the desire to get a good job and the glamour of a cash wage, reinforced by the presence of some relative in Bombay who draws the villager thither, are the main factors. In India, however, migration is the symptom of the breakdown of rural economy

and organization. We fully agree with the Whitley Commission that "the villager is pushed and not pulled to the city."

*Effects of migration.*—The effects of migration on the domestic servant are manifold. The average age at migration is 14.80 years. This early start of work life deprives the boy of education or training for an occupation. It is also responsible for the entire absence of family life for the domestic servant. The lack of facilities for establishing a home in the city stand in the way of marriage and leads to its prevention or postponement. The percentage of unmarried servants is 34.60—a high figure for India where marriage is universal. Out of the 44 married servants, only 3 have their families in Bombay.

The family left behind in the village is also affected by migration. The small amount of money the servant sends home is, no doubt, a welcome increment to the meagre income from agriculture. But, at the same time, the absence of the men-folk creates a dearth of hands on the field, especially during the busy seasons of cutting and harvesting, and necessitates hiring of extra help. This absence, moreover, precludes normal husband-wife and father-child relationships. The migratory man serves as a link with the outside world, but this is not an unmixed blessing as he brings back with him the vices of city life.

Migration creates a disparity of the sexes in the city. According to the census report of 1931, there are only 524 women per 1000 men in Bombay. This gives rise to grave social evils like gambling, drinking, prostitution, homosexuality and venereal diseases. The occupation of domestic service itself is considerably affected by the migratory character of its members.

The servant is never stable in Bombay; he always looks forward to the time when he can return to the village. The following table shows the frequency with which services are changed:—

Duration of Service	No. of Services
0- 3 months	10
3- 6 „	19
6-12 „	42
1- 2 years	35
2- 3 „	20
3- 4 „	12
4- 5 „	7
5- 7 „	10
7-10 „	7
10-15 „	5
Above 15	1

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The average number of services changed by him before he took up his present job is 2.24. From this we can conclude that the migratory character of domestic servants is responsible for a great deal of turnover and for the non-permanent nature of the occupation. The recruitment of these servants is by direct face to face contact between the employer and the servant, this contact being brought about by a friend, a relative or an acquaintance of the servant.

*Nature of work.*—The domestic servant has to perform a wide variety of functions. There is no division of work or well-defined duties. When there is only one servant, as in middle class families, he has to perform all menial duties of the whole household. The following is a rough list of his duties:—

- (a) Cleaning utensils, washing clothes, sweeping and scrubbing floor, dusting furniture, filtering and filling water in pots, cleaning grain, spreading beds.

- (b) Preparing tea, helping in kitchen, serving.
- (c) Leaving children at school, going out to make small purchases, to flour mill and to bring weekly rations, attending the master in person, looking after children, taking them for a walk.

The above list is not exhaustive. Besides these there are numberless orders

issuing from the master, the mistress and even the children throughout the day, and they are difficult to be classified.

The part-time servant is free from such obligations. He is bound to perform some specific duties only and he comes at the appointed time, usually thrice—in the morning, in the afternoon and at night—to perform them. Mostly his duties are connected with cleaning work grouped under (a) above.

The following is the daily routine of a typical whole-time domestic servant:—

Time	Duties
5-30 a.m.	... Getting up.
6-00 a.m. to 6-30 a.m.	... Sweeping rooms.
6-30 a.m. to 7-00 a.m.	... Filtering water from the tap and filling pots.
7-00 a.m. to 7-30 a.m.	... Preparing tea, boiling milk, preparing fire for cooking ( <i>shigris</i> ).
7-30 a.m. to 8-00 a.m.	... Washing cups and saucers, preparing hot water for bath.
8-00 a.m. to 8-15 a.m.	... Folding beds, sweeping bedroom.
8-15 a.m. to 8-30 a.m.	... Serving breakfast.
8-30 a.m. to 9-30 a.m.	... Helping the mistress in kitchen, slicing vegetables, preparing chutney, etc.
9-30 a.m. to 10-00 a.m.	... Rest.
10-00 a.m. to 12-00 noon	... Washing clothes, cleaning bathroom.
12-00 noon to 1-30 p.m.	... Cleaning utensils used for taking lunch, washing kitchen, putting things in order in kitchen.
1-30 p.m. to 2-15 p.m.	... Bath and lunch.
2-15 p.m. to 3-30 p.m.	... Rest pause.
3-30 p.m. to 4-00 p.m.	... Afternoon tea, boiling milk for night.
4-00 p.m. to 4-30 p.m.	... Sweeping rooms.
4-30 p.m. to 6-30 p.m.	... Odd jobs like cleaning ration grains, going to flour mill, and to bazaar for small purchases.
6-30 p.m. to 7-00 p.m.	... Helping in kitchen.
7-00 p.m. to 8-00 p.m.	... Rest or taking children out for a walk.
8-00 p.m. to 8-30 p.m.	... Spreading beds.
8-30 p.m. to 9-30 p.m.	... Cleaning utensils used for taking supper, washing kitchen.
9-30 p.m. to 10-00 p.m.	... Supper.
10-00 p.m.	... Going to bed or for a stroll.

There are no fixed working hours and no definite rest-pauses. The spread-over of the work is from early morning till late at night—almost 17 hours per day. True, his environment is not so jarring as that of a factory worker, nor is the work so strenuous. But these advantages do not compensate for the long spread-over which leads to lack of leisure and recreation. This undermines his health, irritates his nerves and is responsible for his impudent behaviour. He is not protected by legislation specifying the hours of work. Indeed, domestic service is today one of the biggest unregulated occupations needing urgent reform.

The real wages of domestic servants differ substantially from their nominal wages. Besides their monthly wage, all the whole-timers that we studied get food, clothes, housing and other minor benefits. The usual wage period is one month and wages are generally paid at the beginning of the following month. Sometimes, the employer gives advances also; these are deducted later from the pay. The following is a classification of the monthly wages of the 75 cases studied:—

Monthly wage in rupees	No. of cases	Average
1—5	Nil	Rs. 20-7-5
6—10	1	
11—15	20	
16—20	33	
21—25	12	
25—30	3	
31—35	3	
35—40	2	
40 and above...	1	
	75	

Compared to the prewar average monthly wage, of Rs. 9-8-0, the present average shows an increase of almost 215 per

cent. This\* is due to the scarcity of domestic servants on account of the war, on the one hand, and to the increase in demand owing to the influx of population into Bombay, on the other. All the same, it is one of the lowest paid occupations. While it is true that the domestic servant is not affected by the rise in prices so far as his personal wants are concerned, he has to maintain his family in the village and the small sum he sends home every month hardly meets their needs. There are no promotions or grades, no provident fund system and no pension or gratuity scheme.

Domestic service can be classed as a “sweated trade.” For long hours of work and constant attendance, he is paid a wage hardly sufficient to sustain himself and his family. At the same time, due to the unorganized character of the service, he is not in a position to formulate and enforce his demands by collective bargaining. Hence, there is a *prima facie* case for legal intervention to fix minimum wages based on the minimum needs of a family.

A low standard of wages means a low standard of life, poor diet, low vitality and less resistance to diseases. Again, low wages prevent the domestic servant from bringing his family to Bombay and preclude any saving. Thus, the servant has nothing to fall back on when he is ill, unemployed or old, and is compelled to borrow on every such occasion.

As a member of the household, all food requirements of the servant are supplied to him by the employer. In 30 cases, however, discrimination is shown in the food given to the servant. He is given lower quality of rice and only one vegetable. Lesser quantity of ghee is applied to his *chapati* and he is not provided with milk or curds. The

predominance of rice makes it an unbalanced diet lacking in proteins, salts and vitamins. As regards his clothes, the servant wears a small *dhoti* or shorts, and a shirt or *ganji*, provided by his employer.

The servant is also housed by the employer, but he does not get a room, sometimes not even a corner of it. He sleeps on the open terrace, on the broad landings of the staircase, in the narrow lobby connecting the tenements or in the open compound. He has little by way of personal belongings. Yet, 32 of the 75 servants keep their own *kholis* by taking a common room and sharing the rent. From the above, we can give the following approximate idea of his real wages:—

		Rs.	as.	ps.
Cash ...	...	20	7	5
Food ...	...	26	1	0
Clothes ...	...	2	0	0
Rent ...	...	1	0	0
Miscellaneous	...	2	0	0
		<hr/>		
		51	8	5

The domestic servant is entitled to no holidays and no leave. Domestic duties are perennial and so his services also. Whenever he intends to visit his native place, he has either to relinquish his job or leave a *badli* who in his absence will receive the pay. There is no system of sick leave; whenever he is ill, he is at the mercy of his employer. Of course they take a few days off on their special holidays. As regards their health, on the whole it cannot be called bad. They do not suffer from any occupational disease. A common complaint is that of sore feet.

A word about employer-employee relations. The head of the house himself has very little contact with the servant. The management of the house is the

portfolio of the housewife; hence, the servant comes most in contact with her. The relations depend entirely on the character of the two parties. However, as the servant becomes old in the family, the treatment of the mistress becomes kind and affectionate and he is looked upon as a member of the family. Children and old servants are always fast friends. We came across many cases where children liked to spend more time with servants than with their own mothers. Where there is more than one servant in a household, relations between them are usually cordial and co-operative. All this, however, does not prevent the servant from acquiring an inferiority complex as a result of his constant submissive attitude to his master and mistress. Only a living wage permitting a decent standard of life, education and enlightenment, and a strong trade union organization inculcating civic, economic and national consciousness can eliminate this inferiority complex rooted in the mind of the domestic servant.

*Family and social life.*—Whenever the servant falls ill, and the illness prolongs beyond a few days, his sure remedy is a flight to the village. Intimation from the village of the illness of some member of the family or death of a relative, social occasions like betrothal and marriage, etc., also draw him to the village. On an average, he visits the village once a year and this lasts from 15 to 60 days. Whatever family life the servant has, is during this short stay in the village. Thus, family relations are transient and intermittent. As we already saw, the percentage of unmarried servants is high. Out of the 75 studied, 44 are married, 26 are unmarried and 5 are widowers; 46 have families, 24 have single families, 3 have complex families and 2 have no families at all. Marriages at an early age are common. The average

age at marriage of the servant is 19 years and 8 months and of his wife is 12 years and 10 months.

The socio-economic and cultural background of these servants differs according to the places from which they come. The main occupation of the people at these places is agriculture. Their standard of living is very low. In Bombay itself, servants have hardly any social life. They gather together at the *kholi*, chat and discuss their problems, and sing *bhajans*. Thus the *kholi* serves as a centre where a spark of community life is kept alive in the bewildering anonymity of the city. We came across a couple of clubs of domestic servants having regular members who pay monthly subscriptions. There is also a tentative attempt to organize something like a co-operative credit society. An interesting experiment of preserving the village community life in the city is made by the Goanese migrants through the organisation known as the "Institute Indo-Portuguese."

Due to the absence of family life in Bombay, the servants have no opportunity to enjoy themselves on social occasions. But they celebrate religious festivals like Holi, Gokul Ashtami, and Ganpati with great pomp and gaiety. As regards their habits, pan-chewing is universal among the Gati servants. Smoking is less common. By indirect evidence, and by the testimony of employers, we could gather that most of the servants drink occasionally.

Owing to the lack of opportunity, literacy is very low amongst them. Fifteen are literate in the sense of being able to read and write ; two can read and only one is attending a night school. The highest educational level attained is seventh standard Marathi. Only one person knew English.

Even when the servant is literate, he has little time or opportunity for reading anything. Hence, to cover him by the adult education drive, special classes should be organized at a convenient time and place. His philosophy of life is the typically Indian one of acceptance and resignation.

*Budget.*—As we already saw, the income of the domestic servant is not sufficient for the maintenance of himself and his family. Considering the family to be a unit of four members, 2 adults and 2 children, the minimum wage sufficient for their maintenance would be Rs. 75/- a month, counting Rs. 25/- a month as the necessary minimum for an adult and half the same for a child at the prevailing scale of prices. Thus the present wage level (in cash and in kind) which is Rs. 51-8-5 should be extended to Rs. 75/- a month.

The servant is alone in Bombay and his essential needs are provided by the employer ; so, there is nothing like a family budget. Whatever the servant spends is his pocket expense, the rest he sends to the village. The following table summarises his expenses on various items :—

Description	Average monthly expenditure			Percentage
	Rs.	As.	Ps.	
Food and refreshment ...	1	0	0	4.90
Rent ...	1	4	0	6.10
Recreation ...	0	12	0	3.60
Drink ...	0	12	0	3.60
Habits : <i>pan-supari</i> , <i>bidi</i> ...	3	12	0	18.30
Travel ...	1	0	0	4.90
Amount sent to the family	11	15	5	58.60
	20	7	5	100.00

Though the budget is balanced on paper, it is actually a deficit budget. It makes no provision for events like sickness, unemployment or death, and it leaves absolutely no margin for saving as a security for old age.



The savings of servants are briefly enumerated below :—

- (a) *Land*.—44 servants have small plots of land. We could gauge from the description of the land, yield, etc., that the holdings are very small ; in many cases even smaller than 1 acre. This is the result of the practice of subdivision and fragmentation of the soil enjoined by the Hindu Law of Inheritance whereby all the sons are the legal heirs to the landed property on the death of the father. On division, land is reduced into tiny plots too small to be economic holdings on which one family and a pair of bullocks can get labour and maintenance.
- (b) *Cattle*.—32 have some cattle—one or two cows or buffaloes—and those having land maintain a pair of bullocks too. Goats also are found in a few instances.
- (c) *House*.—35 servants have houses of their own, mostly *kachcha* house made of bamboo sticks and mud, or bricks and mud. The cost price of these houses also could not be ascertained because servants knew nothing about it.
- (d) *Cash*.—10 persons have some cash varying from Rs. 40/- to Rs. 1,500/-. This is due to some exceptionally favourable situation and it is not possible to generalize on the basis of these cases.
- (e) *Ornaments*.—29 servants said that their wives had some ornaments of gold and silver on them. But they could not give

even the vaguest idea as to the weight of this gold and silver or its rough value in money.

- (f) *No savings*.—10 persons have no savings at all. They have no material basis of existence either in Bombay or in the village.

41 servants (54.6 per cent) were in debt. Ancestral debt, failure of the monsoon, illness, purchase of land, heavy burden of land assessment, small and uneconomic holdings, lack of sources of credit and absence of village industries are among the causes. The following table gives a classification of their debts :—

Amount of debt in rupees	No. of servants	Average per head
1— 25	1	
25— 50	6	
50— 75	4	
75—100	4	Rs. 189-1-11
100—125	7	
125—150	5	
150—175	4	
175—200	2	
200—300	2	
300—400	1	
400—500	2	
600	1	
700	1	
1000	1	
	41	

The debt of the domestic servant is mostly in the village; and if he is a member of a joint family, it is the family debt. Out of 41 servants who have some debt in the village, 11 have borrowed interest free loans from friends or relatives and 30 from money-lenders. The average rate of interest charged by the latter is as high as 46.36 per cent, which means that once the servant comes into the clutches of the money-lender there is no getting out of it. No regular method of repayment is followed. Whenever the servant has

a small sum of money on hand, he gives it to the creditor which may be construed as the payment of interest. Regular receipts are not taken for these payments. This gives the creditor ample scope for manipulating accounts.

Liquidation of old debts, scaling down of recent ones to the paying capacity of the servant and provision of cheap credit for productive purposes are reforms urgently called for.

*Organization of domestic service.*—Domestic servants are the most difficult to be organized. The nature of their occupation is such as to make the task of organization a difficult one. Contact with the employer is direct, there are no clear-cut employer-employee relations and, consequently, there is an absence of class-consciousness. The relation is a family affair, a domestic problem and no external intervention is asked for or tolerated. Other obstacles are the fact of domestic servants being scattered all over the city, lack of leisure, overwork and fatigue, illiteracy and ignorance, low wages, inefficient organization and absence of the right type of leadership.

The first union of domestic servants was named "The Bombay Domestic Workers' Union." Founded in 1938, it was removed from the list of recognised unions in 1941, as it had ceased to function. A second union called "The Bombay Ghar Kamgar Union" was started in August, 1944, by some enthusiastic Students' Union workers. It has been in existence since then, but does not seem to make much headway. One of its activities was to keep a "complaint book" in which complaints of servants against their employers are entered. The Union corresponded with the employer concerned regarding the grievance and tried to obtain redress for the party damaged,

On the basis of this study, we would like to offer the following suggestions regarding the organization of domestic servants :—

- (1) It is not possible to make an approach to servants through one central organization. The functions of this body should be decentralized, each locality should have a branch office of the union. If possible, each building in a locality should have a sub-committee and one member of this sub-committee should represent it on the branch committee.

As we have already seen, domestic servants have no time or leisure to attend Union meetings. Besides, problems of domestic servants are not only local, but almost domestic, concerning the relations between the employer and the employee. A distant central organization cannot look after all these minor details. Thus, only a scheme of federated branches and sub-branches can approach the mass of domestic servants.

- (2) The monthly subscription should be the lowest possible. On account of the low scale of wages, the servant can ill afford a high subscription. He should not feel it as a tax or as an unnecessary burden.
- (3) Office hours of the various branches should suit the convenience of workers and should not make encroachments on their legitimate hours of rest or recreation.
- (4) In order to keep up the interest of servants, other activities

should be linked up with trade union work. Educative, social and cultural activities like adult education and literacy classes, recreation programmes and celebration of religious festivals can be effectively interwoven.

- (5) Each branch of the locality should have one paid full-time worker to look after the regular office work, records, files, etc. Voluntary workers often spoil the work.

As far as possible, leaders from amidst domestic servants should be chosen. They will wield greater influence because of their better understanding of problems.

- (6) All efforts should be made in the direction of creating in servants a consciousness of their economic and social rights and responsibilities. For this purpose, education, literacy and welfare programmes should be adopted. Only when servants become conscious of their degradation and their rights can there be a sound and powerful organization. The domestic service is a "sweated trade" and, unless the servants are organized, there can be no improvement in the conditions of work.

*Ethics of domestic service.*—Our investigation into the life and labour of domestic servants in Bombay has led us to a fundamental question of social ethics : Is domestic service justifiable ? No doubt, many of the repelling features of slavery are absent in domestic service; still, it involves the subjugation of the human personality which is the essence of slavery.

But, first, let us try to answer the question as to why we want domestic servants. A certain type of domestic work is classed as dirty and we are so much used to see it being done by other people that we have come to think that it is disgraceful to do it, that a disgraced class must exist for doing it. No necessary labour, however, is dirty or disgraceful. If the normal functions of life involve some dirty work, it is the duty of each individual to do his bit of it himself. Again, all useful work, even though dirty, is equally dignified. A part of the dirtiest work in the world is being done by surgeons and physicians who are highly educated, highly paid and who move about in the best society. "Division of work" also demands that all persons should have their share of agreeable as well as disagreeable work.

The only valid objection to the abolition of domestic service is that women are overburdened with domestic responsibilities and need help. But domestic duties need not be a closed preserve for women only ; men too should share them. Self-help and family self-sufficiency, with the equal co-operation of the male and the female, is the view we advocate. Other countries, of course, have put certain substitutes into practice. America has discovered labour saving gadgets, while Russia has adopted socialized services. We would welcome labour saving gadgets into Indian homes, but that will not be possible in the near future. Socialized services provide a broad question of social policy on which we have not yet agreed. While commercialized services are becoming common in India, we do not advocate the usurpation of family functions by private enterprises. Hence, the most ethical, sensible and practical solution of the servant problem in India is family self-reliance with the willing co-operation of all—men, women and even children.

Based on the foregoing conclusions, our suggestions for the reconstruction of domestic service are as follows :—

1. The term "domestic servant" should be abolished. It is derogatory to the human personality. He should be called "help," "housekeeper" or "assistant." The change of name in itself will result in a great change in the status of the domestic servant. "There is much in a name," though Shakespeare may not agree with it. The occupation of domestic service, which is so essential for every household, should not be looked down upon. It should be dignified, and the domestic servant should be given the status of an industrial worker.
2. Hours of work should be fixed at eight hours a day.
3. The servant should be given a weekly holiday with pay. He should also be entitled to one month's privilege leave with pay at the end of one year's service.
4. Minimum wages should be fixed for the occupation so as to cover the necessities of his life and also of his family. Considering the family to be a unit of husband, wife and two children, the minimum wage at the present scale of prices should be Rs. 75/- a month. This should be altered according to variations in the price level.
5. Proper housing accommodation should be provided for domestic servants to make it possible for them to bring their wives and children into the city and to have an independent family life.
6. A social security programme, comprising of (a) Unemployment Insurance, (b) Sickness Insurance, and (c) Old Age Insurance, should be initiated. Such a programme can be a part of a country-wide scheme of social security or, failing this, it can be confined to this occupation alone. Such a programme should be financed by joint contributions of the employer, the servant and the State.
7. A "Domestic Assistants' Act" containing all the above provisions should be passed by the provincial Government. The execution of this law can be entrusted to the Bombay Municipality.
8. There is a grave need for a sound organization of domestic servants to look after their welfare and interests. There should be unit branches of the union in each locality and all these should federate into a huge organization like that of the Bombay Shop Assistants' Federation. Detailed suggestions for such an organization are given above.
9. Proper facilities should be provided for the education of domestic servants and their families. Free primary education should be provided for children and adult education classes for adults. Night classes have been found very convenient for this purpose. Such classes

can be made a charge of the employer.

10. Healthy recreation should be provided for domestic servants, and this responsibility should also devolve on the employer. This may include playground activities, gymnasium, library and reading room, educational films, debates and discussions, celebration of festivals, songs and dances, dramatics, etc.
11. Along with the above suggestions, we should welcome

the advent of machines to do the routine work of the household. Mechanization, to the extent it is possible to introduce in our homes today, would eliminate the need for domestic servants. For the rest, socialization of domestic functions is an experiment worth trying. Community nurseries, community laundries, and school-meals also minimize the need for domestic servants. Yet, to what extent socialization should go is a debatable question.

# CHILDREN'S NUTRITION

R. E. DADACHANJI

There is an irresistible flood of evidence attesting the importance of good nutrition as a factor in positive health. Nutrition work is now recognised as part of a truly constructive programme for child health and protection. While well-nourished children offer few problems, children undernourished over a period of time are found lacking in physical and mental energy. In the following article, the author suggests some nutrition programmes for improving the health of our children.

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Malnutrition has long been recognized as an important feature of our country, but it has become much more serious and has assumed greater prominence since World War II. Shortage in food has now become a chronic problem with us. It is still more an intimate problem from the point of view of the new nation that we are planning to build. We cannot afford to have malnutrition prevailing, if we aim at becoming a strong nation, fit to be considered as an important unit of the world civilization of tomorrow. Hence, malnutrition has turned out to be a bigger problem than it has been considered so long.

The science of nutrition not only deals with what extra food people can secure, but also with the means of obtaining the best out of the short supply we have. It is, therefore, very necessary that this subject should receive enough attention. No effort should be spared in building our nation in such a way as to implement the lessons taught by this science of constructive health. When one thinks of building our nation, one would quickly realise that, with this enormous problem, the best way to set about it is to plan for the adequate care of our future generations so that, in years to come, they would jump in line with other nations of the world in physique and intellect.

European nations, particularly during the last war and thereafter, have been struggling in various directions and organising different services to maintain the

health of their grown up population, and especially that of children and other vulnerable groups. One could state with confidence that the best way to make a beginning in a country like ours is to follow what these countries have been doing to their children, so that the latter may at least grow into a happier and healthier people, ready to face the world in a manner better than what the present generation has been able to do.

The most important feature among these services, that strikes one at present, is a type of communal feeding, known as school feeding, backed by public opinion, public bodies and the State. As its name signifies, feeding in schools, in order to make up for the deficiencies at home, is what is intended in this effort.

Let us now consider the problem from the point of view of the city of Bombay. It is estimated that over a lakh and a half of the city's population are being made literate in public schools alone, while about forty-thousand children are taking their education in private schools. If only this group of the population could be well looked after, what an appreciable result would it immediately produce !

The man in the street believes that what is being supplied to him in the form of foodgrains, gives him all the nourishment that is necessary ; but, unfortunately, rationing is only an effort at supplying

staple foods on a uniform level system, while nutrition demands an all round feeding of foods of both vegetable and animal origin. Thus, leafy and non-leafy vegetables, tubers, &c., are important. Milk predominates in its usefulness among the majority of the vegetarian population, and one need hardly look round to find the scarcity of some of these valuable foods. No wonder that doctors have often complained of the increase of various diseases attributed to malnutrition. This has urged our Government to make local surveys in groups of population in order to get a bird's eye view of the extent of malnutrition.

Nutrition surveys have brought out most consistently the alarming extent of malnutrition among our children and adults. Their proverbially low standard of health is being undermined and it would soon reach a very low level. It goes without saying how important it is to safeguard the health of the child not for his own sake but for the welfare of society at large. It would, therefore, be logical to state that the child should get all the nutritional advice and assistance if he is to be protected against breakdown in health.

Various factors influence the physical fitness and well-being of the child, one of them being the socio-economic background. General experience has revealed that if the family's income is below a certain level, the child runs the risk of becoming physically unfit as a result of unsatisfactory conditions of living and a suboptimal intake of the proper dietary constituents. Poverty and malnutrition go hand in hand, though it must not be forgotten that the latter is also found in the midst of plenty. There is enough evidence to prove that the main cause of malnutrition is poverty and ignorance. Enquiries instituted by the League of Nations

showed that this is so throughout the world. The so-called lower stratas of society have never been and are not well-nourished. So long as our economic system undergoes no modification, this sad state of affairs is likely to persist. It has also been observed from a survey carried out in a labour area that the diet was better in higher income groups than in lower income groups.

The factors responsible for the causation of malnutrition in children are the quantitative and qualitative deficiencies in their diet. Growing children ought to be provided with regular meals at proper intervals. Protective diets in fair quantities are necessary if children are to be guarded from the onslaught of this terrible and insidious plague of malnutrition. Diet surveys show that this shortage is fairly prevalent in hostels and messes in Bombay Province.

Protective foods are, no doubt, comparatively costly and above the reach of the economically handicapped. Yet, one cannot ignore the tremendous loss of nutrients in food due to defective processes of cooking and preserving. Propaganda for proper buying, preserving and cooking appears to be very necessary. Even well-to-do families, who can afford to buy costly food, do not get the full benefit of what they eat due to the lack of knowledge of food values and methods of proper cooking and preserving. In some localities, there are not even adequate facilities for purchasing all varieties of food. Besides these difficulties, age-old customs and religion, food fads and fancies, and faulty habits play an important part in preventing the eating of proper food.

It is now obvious that the economic factor alone does not influence nutrition. Educating people in matters regarding food and nutrition is so vital for their

living healthy lives; and popularising the feeding of children at schools is another important matter which demands urgent consideration. A healthy and well-nourished population is the real wealth and strength of a nation and this has been recognised by the United States, Russia and many other progressive European countries. These countries have shown greater interest in the nutritional well-being of their people which is seen from arrangements made for the feeding of children in schools, and of workers in industrial canteens, and the organisation of community cookhouses.

But, it is a matter of regret that our country lags far behind in this respect. Sometimes through ignorance or indifference on the part of parents, children go to school without a good breakfast, and on some occasions without taking food; and there is a long interval before they get a good meal at night. Often, due to poverty, parents are not able to give their children regular meals. More often than not, children belonging even to well-to-do families do not take a good breakfast before leaving for the school. Sometimes, they do not take anything with them to the school for their mid-day meal with the result that they are hardly attentive to lessons taught in the class and are also found to be malnourished or undernourished. For the proper development of the mind and the body, care and attention are needed during the period when they are in the process of growth and formation. It is from this point of view that children should be given proper food at regular intervals.

An effective and simple way of achieving this end is the introduction of school lunch programmes, in primary and secondary schools, under the able

guidance of trained dietitians. In drawing up such programmes, attention should be paid to the introduction of more protective foods in the lunch. It is in this respect that diets provided at home are usually found lacking. Milk and its products, vegetables and fruits should form the major part of lunch.

The second very important question that needs consideration is the satisfaction of those fed through the school lunch. This satisfaction depends on physical surroundings, teachers, and the quality and quantity of food served. The success of such schemes depends on the attitude, interest and co-operation shown by children.

Children are generally interested only in the food and so the question of menu is very important. As stated previously, the food supplied has to be of the maximum nutritive value and should not cost much. It has to be well-cooked. The child's predilections to colour combination and taste cannot be overlooked and sufficient quantities should be served taking care to see that the food when served is not cold. With such care, the school meal should act as a corrective for the deficiencies in the diet provided at home.

At the present time, when food supplies are rationed, arrangements for starting such lunch programmes are difficult. But, school authorities can even now insist on the bringing of *rotis* or lunch from home by the student which should be consumed at school under the direct supervision of the teacher. Raw vegetable salads, fruits or parched grams or groundnuts, which require little cooking, can be distributed. This will have an added advantage of keeping the children away from the bad and injurious habit of buying eatables exposed to all sorts of dust and infections from roadside hawkers.



Such a scheme, if made sufficiently attractive, will, besides improving the health of the child, help in generating a spirit of brotherhood and in promoting his social development. In addition, it will help the child to give up some of his bad food habits, if any. Deficient food habits, formed in early years, starve the body of some useful nutrients and lead to developmental defects which would persist throughout life.

The most common objection that is usually raised against a scheme of school feeding is the shortage of funds. The co-operation of interested parents and progressive school authorities is very essential under such circumstances and this would contribute a good deal towards that consummation. School lunch programmes, wherever introduced, have resulted in

the increase in weight of children. Parents must first be convinced how much good food contributes to healthy growth; and once they realise that the lunch eaten away from home is just as important as the food at home, they will not hesitate to co-operate with a scheme of school-feeding.

All these apply to the nutrition of children, in general, and to that of school children, in particular. This vital subject has not, so far, received the attention it deserves. From the apathy displayed towards this very important question, it appears that the well-known saying that "the health of the child is the wealth of the nation" has not been taken seriously in our country, when it is an established fact that the lack of adequate nutrition during childhood obstructs full physical and mental development.

## NOTES AND NEWS

### • BALKAN-JI-BARI—AKHIL HIND BALAK SANGH

*"Its work and its activities.*—Balkan-ji-Bari is a Sindhi phrase which, according to Kaka Saheb Kalelkar, has been adopted by Hindustani, and it means 'Children's Garden.' The chief aim of the association is to keep children as happy as possible and to let them develop by themselves. According to our president, Shri B. G. Kher's recent announcement, Balkan-ji-Bari must become a body which could be referred to for solutions of all problems connected with children up to the age of eighteen years. The association has been progressing slowly and steadily, and it is hoped and wished that it shall be able to achieve its aims and objects not very late.

"Balkan-ji-Bari was started in 1926 by a Brother in Sind who prefers to be known as Dada (an elder brother). He felt that as we were growing older and older, we were rather becoming more and more selfish, and, therefore, we were losing our real happiness. He thought that children who were already happy should be able to retain their happiness even as and when they grew old. Thus happiness which everyone is after, which everyone yearns for, would come to stay. With that idea he first started just writing for children, then collected a few of them and arranged programmes for and by them, and later their provincial and all-India gatherings were held. Children who did not know even each other's language felt happy in each other's company. And Dada's expectations began to be realised in seeing children of all castes and creeds forming into one great brotherhood.

"At present Balkan-ji-Bari has provincial organisations only in two provinces, Bombay and Sind. Its branches, however, are spread in almost all parts of the country, including Bengal, Punjab, Delhi, U. P., Bihar and South India,

totalling more than 125, and its membership is nearly 25,000. Boys and girls meet in these centres once a week at least, and oftener at certain places, and arrange different programmes every time. Besides, it has a pen-friendship section which brings children of different places in contact with each other. It has also its own two children's schools, one at Karachi and another at Sukkur.

"Balkan-ji-Bari has two children's own libraries at Khar and Karachi consisting of books for children in different languages. They, however, are small libraries, and need to be expanded. Bari also has a poor children's fund, out of which study scholarships are awarded to its poor, deserving members. It also helps in making collections for deserving causes such as famine and flood relief funds. The association conducts its own four monthly journals *Pushpa* in English and Gujarati, *Hamare Balak* in Hindustani and *Gulistan* in Sindhi, as well as 'Children's Corners' in *Bombay Chronicle* (English), *Pravasi* and *Bombay Samachar* (Gujarati), *Swadeshmitran* (Tamil) and other papers.

"Balkan-ji-Bari has been holding its periodical excursions and tours, as well as workers' camps. So far, about five workers' training camps have been organised. The last time that children were taken on a distant trip was in 1941, when a party of forty Bombay children went as far as Sind and toured round Karachi, Hyderabad, Larkana, Mohan-jo-Daro, Sukkur and other places. At that time an All-India Balkan-ji-Bari Workers' Conference also was held. The second such conference was held in Bombay in December, 1946.

*"Its ambitions and aspirations.*—What concrete things we want to do with a view to fulfilling the aims and objects

of our association, is narrated here below. First of all, we want to educate children in such a manner that they become patriotic and self-reliant Indian citizens having power and endurance and self-sacrifice. To achieve this, undoubtedly, the process would be a very long and sustained one, but our organisation will continue to put forth its efforts. However, whatever it is able to do will more or less be symbolic, because education is the concern first of the parents and homes and then of the school and whole-time institutions.

"Balkan-ji-Bari, at present, is able to do some work only for about ten or twelve hours spread over one whole month, as it is active only on Sundays, and that too for not more than two hours. Within such a short time the work that the organisation would be able to do, can just be symbolic and a directive type of work. Wherever the organisation has a centre or a unit, it will do only such work as is necessary in the interests of the children, and which will be a sort of pointer in that direction—a pointer both to the parents and schools. Over and above all that, this organisation will, in short, try to supplement the home and school activities with a view to directing the children's emotions in a proper manner.

"The organisation has a desire to start an all-India children's volunteer corps in order to increase the children's physical and mental efficiency. Then, it wants to become for the all-India children a single common platform for unity—cultural as well as social—irrespective of any class, rich or poor, any religion,

Hindu or Muslim, any province, Maharashtra or Madras. Besides, it wishes to establish a children's mutual aid centre in all its units. Balkan-ji-Bari aims at becoming an organisation whose branches will be ready, willing and able to solve any difficulty or problem facing parents, society or the Government, in relation to children.

"The children's own library of the Balkan-ji-Bari will contain all kinds of books meant for and relating to children. Its all-India children's own museum will contain whatever the boys and girls might collect out of the hobbies or aesthetic sense, as well as things and materials which will interest and educate them. It will establish study classes on child psychology and on legislations regarding children of this country and also of other countries, and whenever necessary, the organisation will agitate for their betterment. It will try to have a net-work of children's schools on idealistic lines. To sum up, it will establish an all-India children's university.

"In short, the Balkan-ji-Bari wishes to work along the lines indicated above, only with a view to educating children, as mentioned heretofore, that they may become patriotic and self-reliant Indian citizens with enough power of endurance and self-sacrifice for the toughest days that are still ahead of us. Today the organisation does work on these lines, but on a very small scale, and as if negligible. Nonetheless, it is the Bari's ambition to show that all these things are realised, and not only visualised."

#### CHARTER OF THE INDIAN CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

( Prepared by Balkan-ji-Bari )

Every child in India shall have the following rights which will help in his proper development and protection.

(1) The child shall live in a free land, in a free atmosphere and in a free environment; every opportunity for his all

round development shall be available to him, unhampered by any limitations of caste or creed.

(2) The child shall be provided with a happy home environment, free from fear and chastisement; he shall be adequately fed and clothed and brought up with love and understanding.

(3) The child and his mother shall be assured proper ante-natal, natal and post-natal care.

(4) The child shall receive at all stages of his growth up to adolescence adequate medical aid; his health and well-being shall be the prime concern of his parents or guardians and of the State.

(5) The child shall receive the best education to which his talent entitles

him, and education that is both liberal and useful, and that prepares for good citizenship and service; his education shall be a first charge on the revenues of the State.

(6) The child has a right to play and recreation, and sufficient facilities for the purpose must be provided for him by the schools and the local authorities.

(7) The child shall be protected by legislation from exploitation in any form for the benefit of parents or guardians.

(8) The child who is backward or defective shall be provided with special institutions for his care and education.

(9) The child in the village shall have the same privileges and facilities that are assured to the city child.

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#### DRIVE TO REDUCE ACCIDENTS IN SMALL INDUSTRIES

A recent survey conducted by the U. S. Department of Labour reveals that between 70 to 85 per cent of industrial accidents in the United States occur in small establishments (manufacturing plants, service industries such as laundries, hotels, garages, and machine shops, agriculture, etc.). As a result, the Division of Labour Standards of the U. S. Department of Labour has launched "Operation Safety" in an effort to cut down an accident rate which in 1946 resulted in 16,500 deaths; 1,800 permanently totally disabled; 93,100 permanently partially disabled; and 1,951,700 temporarily disabled with an average of 17 days loss of work. Of these accidents, only 15 to 30 per cent occurred in the great industrial plants of the United States, which have long been more safety-conscious than the small establishments.

The Division of Labour Standards is carrying out its present programme through the labour commissioners of the various states. Assistance is also given to labour unions and employers, on request. The first part of "Operation Safety" includes the dissemination of information by means of posters and safety packets. These packets, prepared by the Division of Labour Standards and sent out each month, outline the duties of a safety committee and give step-by-step instructions on how to conduct a safety campaign.

To make the worker safety conscious on his job, the Division of Labour Standards has prepared "process flow charts" for certain industries which show the flow of materials from the original source to the finished product, together with the accident hazards encountered in manufacturing.

A process flow chart made for the brick and tile industry of North Carolina, shows the causes of potential accidents in this field to be: boilers, explosives, mining, crushing, transportation, hoisting, platforms, falling material, belts, pulleys, gears, stairs, ladders, hand tools, electricity, dust, piling and loading. Statistics show that the majority of accidents are caused by common, not special, hazards.

••• The second part of the Division of Labour Standards safety programme is the training of state factory inspectors in accident prevention. Since 1936, R. P. Blake, senior safety engineer with the Division of Labour Standards, has been conducting training programme for these state inspectors. This includes four 30-hour courses, taken at intervals of about six months. The basic idea is to make the inspectors aware of the need for safety and then show them what should be done.

Fundamental to any safety programme says Blake, is a review of plant accident records which compare the individual plant injury rate with the national or state experience; these records are also important

factors in finding the source and cost of injuries. In many small establishments, however, accident records are incomplete or not kept at all. State factory inspectors can point out the need for such records and advise on their preparation.

The low percentage of accidents in big industry is accounted for chiefly by the work of the National Safety Council, which was formed in 1913 by a number of large manufacturing plants in the United States following the enactment of workmen's compensation legislation. It is now realized that if small establishments are to cut down their high accident percentages, a safety programme must be initiated through state inspectors and through voluntary co-operation on the part of employers and employees.

The effectiveness of "Operation Safety" is being proved already by requests from numerous states for special studies of small industries in their respective sections. The Division of Labour Standards will continue to aid in this national problem of lowering industrial accident rate to the irreducible minimum.

#### TRAINING IN LEADERSHIP

Convinced that the liberal arts college must assume responsibility for training its men and women in community leadership, Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, is offering a new course this fall (autumn) to be known as "Great Issues." Designed to acquaint undergraduate students with the basic national and international problems of the day, it will be a required course for all seniors, regardless of their field of specialization.

The course itself, believed to be the first of its kind in a major institution of higher education in the United States, will have three main objectives:

- (1) A common intellectual experience will be given to all seniors, regardless of their major field;
- (2) An attempt will be made to bridge the gap between adult and undergraduate education; and
- (3) It will endeavour to give the students an understanding of the basic issues confronting present-day society.

To accomplish these objectives, the course has been set up in a new manner, without regard for traditional college rules. Basically it consists of three sessions

each week. One morning all the students will meet in the college auditorium (there is no classroom large enough to accommodate them all) and will be "briefed" by some faculty member on the subject for discussion that week. At the second meeting, a guest lecturer will present his views on the topic in question, and at the next session, the students, led by the college president or a guest speaker, will discuss, explore, analyse, and develop the issue.

Apart from these lectures and discussions, each student will also be expected to work on some project in connection with the course. Present plans envisage division of the students into 20 or 25 small groups, to each of which will be assigned a specific problem.

The text-book for the course will be the newspaper. Each senior will be expected to subscribe to one of the major New York dailies, and will be asked to read it each day, attempting to evaluate and interpret the news. As a further aid to students in understanding the press, a "public affairs laboratory" will be established in the college library. It will be equipped with newspapers, magazines and periodicals of all sorts that provide factual material or expression of opinion on national and international issues of current significance. The students will be expected and required to make ex-

tensive use of this "laboratory" as part of their course work.

Although a new issue or problem will be presented to the students each week, these will be phases of one of the six main sections into which the course is divided. The first deals with newspapers and with introductory discussion about what a "great issue" actually is. Next will come a series of lectures on "Modern Man's Political Loyalties," followed by a third section called "The Scientific Revolution" which will stress the sudden emergence of the atomic age. Next will be discussion of international aspects of world peace, followed by a series of discussions on U. S. aspects of the same subject. The sixth and final section of the course is called "What Values for Modern Man." Here, after having studied some of the urgent issues confronting mankind today, the students will get to the basic "whys" of these issues and study the moral and ethical values underlying U. S. culture.

The course has attracted considerable attention in many parts of the country. It is frankly experimental, but as the *New York Times* education editor writes: "If the students learn how to read the newspapers intelligently, if they get an understanding of the serious issues confronting the world, and at the same time if they become better citizens, the 'Great Issues' course will have fully proved its worth."

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#### INFANT SCHOOLS

It has been fully realized in most countries in Europe and America that the nursery or infants' school has an important part to play in the educational system. Extremely efficient systems of kindergarten and nurseries have, therefore, been evolved there. With a view to meeting this deficiency in the Dominions, His Exalted

Highness' Government have sanctioned a scheme designed to provide a machinery for proper sensory training of infants, the promotion of their self-expression, community living and companionship in a carefully controlled environment. As the scheme is mainly concerned with the pre-primary education stage and as teachers

for the schooling of infants have necessarily got to be women who alone possess the requisite sympathy and knowledge of child-nature, it aims at training teachers specially for this stage of education. The scheme has been divided into two stages of seven years each, and it is proposed to have 140 trained teachers at the end of the first stage. It is expected they will be able to handle 4,200 children in model schools which will be established at suitable centres in the Dominions. In the

14th year—the last year of the second stage—560 women teachers will be available to teach 16,800 children. The expenditure at the end of the seventh year, including the cost of training teachers, is estimated at 1.76 lakhs and in the fourteenth year at 6.80 lakhs. The cost of training a teacher works out at Rs. 500/- per year and the per capita cost of instruction is estimated at Rs. 30/-. —*New Hyderabad*, Vol. 1, No. 9, p. 11 (August, 1947).

### SOCIAL SECURITY

In his fifth lecture on "Social Security", in the Perin Memorial Series, Prof. Kirkaldy said that mankind in the present century had more than its share of adventure and that the cry today was for security. The need of the time was to combine security with initiative but the problem was to arouse a form of collective initiative within every country so that the nation as a whole might enjoy social security.

In the striving after social security it was possible to distinguish three main competitors who made provision against the vicissitudes and misfortunes of industrial life, namely, the worker, the employer and the State; the modern tendency however was towards co-operation between these three partners but the control and direction seemed to have gone to a generous, paternalistic and all providing State. While such a movement of emphasis was probably inevitable and possibly desirable, one could not forget the fundamental truth that the State could only redistribute wealth and that the efforts of those engaged in industry could alone create it.

Speaking of the origins of social security, the Professor referred to private and religious charity as the earliest form

of relief of need. The second stage of development was that of State relief or Poor Law Relief which was probably an early sign of the awakening of the social conscience in most countries. It was however a desire for something more palatable than state relief that led to the formation of mutual insurance associations, endeavouring in a humble way at the cost of a few pence per week to make some provision against the manifold hazards of an industrial life. Such informal associations developed in some cases into trade unions the most notable example of which was the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, formed in 1850. This New Model Unionism as it was called was however eclipsed by the New Unionism in the 1890's which placed less emphasis on friendly society and benefit activities and which, though it benefited by the lessons of efficient administration which the New Model Unionism had taught, was its antithesis in most matters of policy. It sought to organise the masses; its creed was the solidarity of the working class and it believed in political action and that social security represented "duties and responsibilities that only the State or the whole community can discharge."

The first steps in State action towards social security were, strangely enough taken, not at the expense of the State and not as a co-operative effort on the part of the State and industry but as the sole and direct charge of the employer, e. g., the Employers' Liability Act of 1880 and the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897. A new conception of social security appeared for the first time in Britain in 1908—social security provided at the sole cost of the State—in the form of old age pensions, followed by the legislation in 1911 which provided at the joint expense of the State, employer and the employed, National Health Insurance Disablement and Maternity Cash benefits, and the Employment Insurance to about 2½ million workers in industries of specially fluctuating employment.

Little purpose would be served by a detailed description of the steps by which this system developed to a stage when the whole of the industrial, commercial and agricultural employed population was covered by a variety of schemes as this whole body of social security legislation which had grown up piecemeal and unco-ordinated had been or was about to be replaced by a still more comprehensive system which was comprised within for Acts of Parliament—the Family Allowances Act (1945), the National Insurance Act (1946), the National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act (1946), and the National Health Services Act (1946).

*Minimum standards of existence.*—The main principle underlying the new scheme was that of the national minimum; a new conception of the duty of the State to provide a minimum standard adequate for reasonable and self-respecting existence in childhood and old age, in sickness and health, in employment and unemployment. It was also based on the economic argument that increased production alone

would not abolish want unless purchasing power was maintained and this could be done only through social insurance which not only redistributed wealth between different periods of a worker's life but also between different classes.

As a measure of the growth of social security the following figures might be of interest. In 1901 the State spent £4 millions on social security measures, and in 1939 £303 millions. Under the new scheme the cost to the State was estimated to be £747 millions in 1948, and £1016 millions in 1978. Of these £747 millions and £1016 millions, the State would contribute £375 millions and £646 millions respectively leaving for division between employers and workers in each period some £370 millions.

Social security was clearly an objective of the working man but did not in itself contain the elements of incentive necessary for its achievement. In any highly developed form it was therefore suitable only for a society which by the education of its people or by some other means had been able to develop a collective social conscience. But even if a complete system of social security could not be provided, there were certain priorities which might provide a guide to its employment, humanitarian and productive, e. g., relief of destitution, old age provision, etc.

Concluding, Prof. Kirkaldy said: "The aim of those who contemplate a system of social security should be to establish an order of priority best suited to meet the needs of the country concerned, to provide not merely future liabilities but to develop future assets and so to build the foundations of a structure on which future advance can be made towards the pinnacles of refinement of freedom from want.—*Tisco Review*, Vol. XV, No. 2, pp. 61–63 (March, 1947).



## OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE IN REVIEW

The Minister of National Insurance has appointed a committee<sup>1</sup> to review the policy adopted in scheduling occupational diseases under the Workmen's Compensation Acts and to advise on the selection of diseases for insurance under the National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act. This Act came on the statute book in 1946 and will become operative during 1948, although the appointed day has not yet been announced. It will replace the present system of compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Acts, which will be repealed. The principle of listing, or scheduling, occupational diseases is to be retained, and under the new Act they will be known as "prescribed" diseases. "A disease may be prescribed... if the Minister is satisfied that it ought to be treated, having regard to its causes and incidence...as a risk of their (insured persons') occupations and not as a risk common to all persons; and it is such that, in the absence of special circumstances, the attribution of particular cases to the nature of the employment can be established or presumed with reasonable certainty." The Minister must decide at an early date which diseases are to be included within this definition, and so he has set up this committee to advise him.

The first Workmen's Compensation Act became law in 1898. Its importance in industrial legislation was soon evident, and its provisions were widened in the Act of 1906, particularly in regard to occupational diseases. The Third Schedule appended to this Act specified six conditions for which the worker could claim compensation: mercury, lead, phosphorus, and arsenic poisoning, anthrax, and ankylos-

tomiasis in miners. It was realized almost immediately that there were other diseases which could be added to the Schedule, so in August, 1906, the Home Secretary set up a committee "to inquire and report what diseases and injuries, other than injuries by accident due to industrial occupation, were distinguishable as such, and could properly be added to the diseases for which compensation was paid under the Workmen's Compensation Acts." This committee had Mr. Herbert Samuel, M. P., now Viscount Samuel, as chairman. The two medical members were the Regius Professor of Physic at Cambridge University and the Medical Inspector of Factories—at that time there was only one medical inspector. The committee took evidence at forty-one sittings in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Swansea, Glasgow, and other industrial cities; it visited many factories; and the medical members examined a number of workers. Before any disease was scheduled the committee applied three tests: Was it outside the category of accidents and diseases already covered by the Act? Did it incapacitate from work for more than one week (the minimum period for which compensation was payable)? Was it so specific that the causation of the disease or injury by the employment could be established in individual cases? The result was that some sixteen diseases were added to the Schedule, thus enlarging the list to twenty-two in all. Conditions such as poisoning from carbon monoxide, sulphuretted hydrogen, sodium cyanide, and potassium chlorate, as well as "brass-founders' ague," mange, and bottle-makers' cataract, while fully investigated by the committee, were not included.

<sup>1</sup> Members of the Committee are Judge E. T. Dale, chairman, with Sir R. K. Bannatyne, Mr. S. Chapman, Mr. C. R. Dale, Dr. J. Vaughan Jones, Prof. R. E. Lane, Dr. E. R. A. Merewether, Mr. H. M. Piper, Mr. F. Stilwell, Dr. A. L. Winner, and Mr. F. K. Forrester, secretary.

By 1946 the scheduled diseases<sup>2</sup> had gradually increased 'to forty-four, largely on the advice of the Factory Department,<sup>3</sup> and included "cataract in glass-workers." Silicosis, asbestosis, and the condition of the lungs known as dust reticulation are not scheduled under the Act in the ordinary way, but power has in the past been given to the Minister to make special schemes for the compensation of workers employed in specified industries or processes who contract one of these diseases as a result of their employment. A number of schemes have been drawn up—for example, the Refractories Industries (Silicosis) Scheme, the Metal Grinding Industries (Silicosis) Scheme, the Various Industries (Silicosis) Scheme, and so on. Here, surely, is an opportunity for the new committee to do some tidying up, particularly in linking diseases with industrial processes. In the new Act, as in the Workmen's Compensation Act, there is mention of the pneumoconioses. Dust reticulation, however, is mentioned for the first time.

The Industrial Injuries Act has other implications, some of which were discussed by Stewart<sup>4</sup> when the Bill was being debated. In establishing a claim for compensation the present procedure is for the worker said to be suffering from a scheduled disease, say dermatitis, to be examined by the examining surgeon. He then receives a certificate stating that he is, or is not, suffering from the disease. Appeal from this decision, by the man or his union, or by the firm through its insurance company, is to a single medical referee, whose decision is final. Neither of these procedures is to be retained. Medical boards and appeal tribunals are to be set

up instead. Wisely, the Act allows questions as to temporary disablement to be referred to a single medical practitioner appointed by the Minister, instead of to a medical board. But no one doctor can, as in the past, be both judge and jury. This is fairer to the worker and to the medical profession.

Another important change is that payments will be made by the Ministry of National Insurance from a fund contributed by workmen, employers, and the State. Private insurance in this respect will cease, as will much of the work done now by doctors on behalf of insurance companies. The fund will normally have an annual income of over £25,000,000,<sup>5</sup> and the number of persons employed in industry and covered by the Act, but not necessarily at much risk, is over 18,000,000. Benefits are of two types: (a) an injury allowance payable for 26 weeks; (b) a disablement pension payable when the man continues to be incapable of work after this period. Future compensation will be based not on loss of earning power but on the character of the injury; the loss of a finger may leave the earning power of one man unimpaired but seriously interfere with the earning power of another, yet both will receive the same allowance or pension.

An important issue is raised when the rates of benefit under this Act are compared with those under the new National Insurance Act. Persons suffering from injuries and diseases arising out of their employment will receive somewhat higher rates of benefit than individuals disabled by conditions which have not been "prescribed." The fact that there is a

<sup>2</sup> *Memorandum on the Workmen's Compensation Acts, 1925-45.* H.M.S.O. 1946.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for 1932*, p. 53. H.M.S.O. 1933.

<sup>4</sup> *British Medical Journal*, 1946, 1, 561.

<sup>5</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, 1947, 55, 77.

difference may give rise to abuse. The sick worker, comparing the two schemes, may try to obtain the more favourable return for his contributions by claiming that his disability was caused by his work; or he may try to prolong his absence beyond the 26-week period and thus qualify for a pension. This will no doubt exercise the minds of the new committee and particularly its medical members, to whom the problems of certification are well-known. When it appears that a man's disability may have been caused by his occupation, a feeling of resentment against his work and his employer is not infrequently created. This may retard cure and prolong incapacity periods. If a disability is regarded as not due to work (involving perhaps only 10s. a week less in benefit) the man is often readier to return to his job, and psychological disturbances do not arise. This is one cogent reason for asking the committee to go carefully before it adds to the list. "Aggravation" clauses which the trade unions may press for should also be opposed, not necessarily for highly technical or legal reasons but in the direct interest of the workers.

On both sociological and economic grounds, however, the new Act is, on the face of it, a more satisfying document than the Workmen's Compensation Act. For one thing, it deals with prevention, hopefully perhaps, but the fact remains that it creates hope, and it appears to be constructive. Section 73 states that the Minister may promote research into the causes, incidence, and prevention of industrial accidents, injuries, and disease; he may himself employ persons to do this or help other workers financially. Judgment will be suspended until there is evidence of practical implementation of this part of the Act. For example, what is to be the link with the Medical Research Council? Clearly, however, the country cannot afford to pay out vast money benefits without the closest scrutiny of methods of preventing injury and disease. The worker, now a partner in the payment of contributions as well as a potential recipient of benefits, must become as eager a scrutineer as, no doubt, will be the officials of the new Ministry of National Insurance.—*British Medical Journal*, May 17, 1947, p. 686.

#### SEX LIFE OF PRISONERS

Admittedly, individuals have certain basic needs, physical, economic and psychological. To meet them, society is organised. Society, however, does not recognise that those who break its laws have also these needs, though it is now known that these so-called criminals are not wholly responsible for their actions. A part of the blame must be accepted by society itself.

No thought is given to the fact that the needs of an individual do not disappear with his segregation in gaol, which only means that he is moved from one social system to a still more defective system.

The life of a prisoner, in New South Wales for instance, means that he spends 17 hours a day alone in a cell. The prisoner eats alone, his visitors are seen through a grille or at best in a room supervised by a warder. Thus all that tends to make him human is not only lacking but is definitely ruled out. This is because of the assumption that an individual who commits a crime deserves only punishment. Public opinion educated by psychiatrists and psychologists is slowly moving towards a greater understanding of Man, including the criminal. It is now admitted that he is often "driven" to anti-social actions,

without himself knowing why. Yet, existing laws lack this understanding, so also administration in all fields.

Among the basic needs of man, the most important and the one that affects his unconscious is sexual fulfilment, which is entirely ignored as far as a prisoner is concerned, along with his other needs. This results in frustration, resentment and exasperation. A psychological tension is created which, within prison walls, quickly grows and expresses itself in sex perversions such as masturbation and homosexuality. Emotional instability is heightened in this sex permeated atmosphere and emotional instability is one of the major causes of crime. Lack of understanding of this fundamental fact on the part of the authorities, who with the prisoners regard sex as shameful, contributes to this atmosphere.

To remedy this state of affairs, the reforms usually suggested are, shorter hours spent in cells, better food and more recreational facilities. These will help only in a minor way to solve the problem. The most essential reform, especially for the long-term prisoner, should be to have his important basic need, sex expression,

fulfilled. This could be done by allowing the prisoner to meet his marriage partner occasionally. It should be remembered that sex deprivation affects also the partner outside the gaol who often forms other ties, thus further embittering the prisoner.

This concession would not only benefit the prisoner (for it is certain that good treatment makes better men where bad treatment makes worse), but eventually society would regain a citizen fitted to the world outside. It may be conceded that this privilege has to be earned and is to be granted only to those who would be prepared to co-operate in a scheme of rehabilitation. Such consideration may be construed as a tolerance of sin, if not an encouragement, but is it paradoxical to state that the worse a man appears to be, the better we should treat him? U.S.S.R. has experimented on these lines with good results. For this, the unquestioning acceptance of baneful traditions and customs prevalent even today must die.

What man is we know—what he can be we can only surmise. —Irene Speight in *Marriage Hygiene*, Second Series, Vol. I, No. 1 (August, 1947).

#### ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WORK

If family is the root of society, society and social regard have been the sustainers of the family. In fact the human family would not be possible without the socialised instincts of man and woman, the father and mother. That is why social work, the quintessence of which is mutual help and sympathy, or fellow-feeling, is universal to mankind. It was a rare phenomenon in very primitive society that the aged and disabled were mercifully put to sleep as among the ancient Eskimo, or the dead or dying were abandoned as among some

African tribes. Even these apparently un-social acts were carried out with due ceremony and they were impelled not by selfish motives but by an idea of preserving social well-being, and the larger interests of the clan or tribe as a whole. The Spartan weakling was sacrificed in order that as an adult he may not be a burden to society.

From these ancient, inchoate attempts of primitive man at social health and well-being to the present day systematic and scientific measures of states at com-

prehensive social security for all their members is a very far cry. The intervening period gives us glimpses of man's continuous struggle to civilize and socialize himself, the one central thread running through all these activities being to achieve the greatest good of the greatest number by ways, which he considered appropriate according to the spirit of changing times.

The soldier, politician and demagogue has lead him one way, the thinker, reformer, saint and prophet has beckoned him to another. One can have little doubt that the humanitarian in him will triumph in the end. For, human civilisation, inspite of some of its strange developments, is essentially based on the social instincts of man. In peace time, social virtues of helping the aged and weak, relieving the sick and suffering, looking after the cripple were practised daily as a matter of unconscious routine, but it was during the first big wars that the need of organised social work was felt for the relief of the wounded, maimed and crippled soldier, for helping the widow, mother or children of the dead one, for assisting those who had suffered loss owing to destruction of their fields or houses by fire, flood or looting.

It is this systematic and organised effort at relieving human suffering and rehabilitating the handicapped man, woman and child that goes today by the name of social work. Largely attempted and organised in earlier times by private philanthropy or religious orders, with solitary exceptions as of the Elizabethan Poor Law, today social work touches civilised society at so many points that it can no longer be confined to private effort. In feudal society, the individual in distress was largely looked after by his guild, group or feudal lord. The Industrial

Revolution, however, brought its own problems arising out of the rapid disintegration of family and group life. The herding together of vast numbers of unorganised individuals in large towns and cities created socio-economic problems that defied individual effort and required handling on an organised, civic or national scale.

Thus began civic and state responsibility for the alleviation of distress of the varieties of handicapped and maladjusted in what is now a highly complex social fabric in densely populated urban and industrialized areas. In this field, Germany led the European countries in the beginning of the twentieth century, with her famous Elberfeld system of state social services, based with characteristic thoroughness on the smallest organised unit, the parish with its citizen almoners. Great Britain, however, followed fast with her Charity Organisation Societies and family case work. Today she is in a position to inaugurate social services of vast magnitude and seriously discuss the Beveridge plan of nation-wide social security. Smaller European countries like Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, however, have shown the way to a balanced socialized economy wherein the individual is free from wants and fear of insecurity, and the jarring contrasts of wealth and poverty, luxurious superfluity and elementary want have been largely abolished. The quality and extent of the nation-wide social services of these smaller but closely knit countries are a measure of the level of their human civilization.

In an age of industrialism, with the tremendously heightened mobility of labour and disruption of group life, social work is no longer considered an act of charity but an act of social justice, readjustment and necessary rehabilitation of the handi-

capped individuals and families reduced to straitened circumstances often for reasons beyond their control. It is because of the recognition of this fundamental right of every honest citizen to the decencies of life that public assistance in Europe, America and a good many oriental countries has assumed the form of social legislation as witnessed in Health and Unemployment Insurance, Maternity Benefits, Old Age and Widows Pensions, Orphan and Children's Acts, Juvenile Delinquency, Workmen's Compensation, Factory Acts, etc.

This vast state legislation has had its repercussions on the educational system and the status and training of the social worker. There are courses for degrees, diplomas and certificates for theoretical and practical training in almost every Western university, and both the voluntary and paid social workers take one or the other course of training. Social Work is no longer considered the perquisite or pastime of the rich and leisured class. The complex problems of the physically, mentally, morally and economically handicapped demand expert care and attention, which only trained workers can give. It is now well-realized that mere zeal and sympathy, however exuberant, are not enough. For the rehabilitation of the variously handicapped, besides the virtues of sympathy, aptitude, patience and kindness, tact, training, accumulated experience of case-work and a thorough understanding of the background of society and the victims of maladjustment are necessary.

India, with so much distress among her vast population, owing to poverty, illiteracy, unfavourable social customs and traditions, can so far boast of only one such institution for the training of social workers, viz., The Tata Institute of Social Sciences, founded by that farsighted house

of pioneers of various industrial and scientific undertakings in our land. And yet India is a country, where welfare work is needed on a grand scale, because of the social, economic and cultural backwardness of millions of her peoples. Whereas charity and social service have been held in high esteem in India from times immemorial, as can be instanced in her *Gram Panchayets*, *Sadavrats Maths*, *Musafirkhanas*, *Langarkhanas*, *Dharmashalas*, giving of alms, feeding of beggars, *Sadhus* and *Fakirs*, systematic social service of an organised nature is hardly fifty years old. Social reform is older, but it dealt more with harmful socio-religious customs and traditions rather than the systematic removal of social distress. The Indian National Social Conference started dealing with problems of social reform under the guidance of the late Mr. Justice M. C. Ranade as early as 1889 and held its annual sessions almost for thirty-five years.

Institutions for true social work, however, came into being later in the form of *Seva Sadans*, *Seva Samitis* and Social Service Leagues, which gradually came to be established all over the country. It was in 1916 when the Indian National Congress met in Lucknow, that the idea of starting an All India Organisation of Social Workers was first conceived at the suggestion of Dr. D. N. Maitra, founder of the Bengal Social Service League. Accordingly, the first Social Service Conference was held at Calcutta in December 1917 simultaneously with the session of the Indian National Congress; and its first president was no other than the Architect of India's Freedom, and one of the greatest social workers India has produced, Mahatma Gandhi. The second session was held in 1918 at Delhi under the presidentship of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

The continuity of the Conference was however broken thereafter and efforts

were again made at the third Social Service Conference in Madras in 1922 to revive the All India Organisation. The fourth session was held in December 1923 in Bombay with Sir Lallubhai Shamaldas as the Chairman of the Executive Committee and Dr. Mrs. Annie Beasant as the President. The All India Conference seems to have again met with mishap and in subsequent years only provincial conferences were held in Madras, Calcutta, Bombay and other places. The founding of the Servants of India Society by the late Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was an effort to built up a country-wide network of social service with a devoted band of workers dedicating their lives to the service of the distressed, downtrodden, handicapped and maladjusted.

On the eve of India's independence, it was therefore a happy move on the part of the Alumni Association of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences to have called a meeting of various social welfare agencies in the city of Bombay to organise an All India Conference of Social Work. The meeting readily recognised the value of such a Conference, so that social workers doing field work in various spheres may be brought together to discuss their common problems and exchange their varied experiences, leading to mutual advantage and improvement of their work and technique.

The Conference has another laudable objective in view, and that is to explore the possibilities of establishing on a permanent footing an All India Conference of Social Work, so as to help in co-ordinating welfare work affecting the peoples of India, give advice and guidance, and act as a clearing house of information. It can hardly be denied that such co-ordination and helpful guidance both to state social services and private charity and

philanthropy are long overdue in our country, where scattered individualistic efforts are at times doing great harm to the healthy sections of society by misguided or sentimental charity and philanthropy—of which there is more than a fair amount prevalent in our country. In the words of that wise Irish Sage, George Bernard Shaw :

“The virtues that feed on suffering are very questionable virtues. There are people who positively wallow in hospitals and charitable societies and relief funds and the like, yet who, if the need for their charitable exercises were removed, could spend their energy to great advantage in improving their own manners and learning their own business. There will always be plenty of need in the world for kindness ; but it should not be wasted on preventable starvation and disease. Keeping such horrors in existence for the sake of exercising our sympathies is like setting our houses on fire to exercise the vigour and daring of our fire brigades. It is the people who hate poverty, not those who sympathise with it, who will put an end to it. Almsgiving, though it cannot be stopped at present, as without it we should have hunger riots, and possibly revolution, is an evil.”

It is also well-known that enlightened co-operation and co-ordination can effect saving, prevent overlapping and wasted or reduplicated effort.

Obviously, it is neither possible nor wise to deal with all the problems affecting the varieties of handicapped and mal-

adjusted in a Conference like this. It has therefore been decided to focus the attention of the delegates on the following subjects:

1. State and Social Services.
2. Community Organization and Rehabilitation.
3. Family and Child Welfare Services.
4. Youth Organizations.
5. Rehabilitation of the Handicapped and the Maladjusted.
6. Private Philanthropy and Social Welfare.
7. Co-operation between Social Welfare Agencies and Co-ordination of Social Work.
8. Training and Equipment of the Social Worker.

It is not the purpose of the Conference to make it a speech-making or resolution-passing venue, which is a danger for such Conferences. Experts or workers acquainted with each specialized subject will, therefore, be invited to take part in the discussions, which should substantially contribute to the knowledge of the subject. The agreed viewpoints and conclusions arrived at

in the Sectional Meetings will be brought up in the form of Sectional Reports before the Plenary Sessions of the Conference for adoption.

It is a happy augury for the Conference that the Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr. B. G. Kher, an indefatigable social worker and the premier public servant of the Province, has very kindly accepted the Organisers' invitation to inaugurate the Conference, which will be held in Bombay at the Sunderbai Hall from 6th to 9th November. Accredited social welfare agencies or institutions can send a maximum of five delegates each and individuals actively associated with social work can join as visitors on payment of Rs. 10/-.

At a time that our country's energies are being bent unitedly towards creative and constructive work for the socio-economic, educational and cultural amelioration of the masses, it is hoped the Conference will fulfil a useful purpose in giving a much needed lead to social workers in the systematic and scientific handling of India's many social ills and problems and all those engaged in such work will participate in it to make it a success.—A *Broadcast talk over the Bombay station of the All India Radio, by Dr. J. F. Bulsara, General Secretary of the All India Conference of Social Work.*

#### TATA INSTITUTE NEWS

*Late Sir Bomanji Wadia.*—It is with deep regret that we record the death of Sir Bomanji Wadia, Member of the Governing Board of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, ex-judge of the Bombay High Court and ex-Vice-chancellor of the Bombay University on the morning of Sunday, 8 August the 17th, 1947.

Sir Bomanji was well-known for his erudition and scholarly attainments. He was a good judge who imparted a touch of refinement and culture to everything he did on the bench. As Vice-chancellor of the Bombay University, he was responsible for several reforms. A condolence resolution mourning the death of Sir Bomanji



and expressing its deep and heartfelt sympathy with the bereaved family, was passed by the Faculty at its meeting held on September the 6th, 1947.

*Lady Mountbatten's visit.*—Her Excellency Lady Mountbatten visited the Institute on Monday, August the 18th, 1947. She was received by Sir Sorab Saklatvala, Chairman of the Governing Board who introduced to Her Excellency the Director and Members of the Faculty. The party then listened to Dr. Kumarappa who explained the work of the Institute and its future plans of expansion.

Her Excellency wrote to Sir Sorab and Dr. Kumarappa expressing her appreciation of the work done by the Institute.

*Students' Union.*—Mr. T. Gopalakrishna Rao (Class '48) has been elected President and Mr. V. P. Baliga (Class '49) General Secretary of the Union. Mr. N. C. Biligiri Rangiah (Class '48), Miss B. M. Roovala (Class '48) and Mr. B. H. Warden (Class '49) are the other members of the Executive Committee for the first term of the academic year 1947-48.

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#### CLASS OF 1947-49.

Ahmed, (Miss) A. K.  
B. A., Lucknow University, 1946  
Lucknow, U. P.

Ahmed, M. R.  
B. A., Aligarh University, 1947  
Benares, U. P.

Baliga, V. P.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1945  
North Kanara, Bombay Province

Bakthavatsalam, V. R.  
M. A., Madras University, 1946  
Salem, Madras Province

Bhatia, (Miss) S.  
B.A., Punjab University, 1947  
Lahore, Punjab

Bhatt, N. N.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1947  
Bhavnagar, Bhavnagar State.

Bose, B. K.  
B. Sc., Patna University, 1943  
Ranchi, Bihar

\*Daftary, (Miss) N. R.  
Bombay City

Dalal, (Miss) I. P.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1947  
Bombay City

Dastur, (Miss) S. F.  
B. A., Nagpur University, 1946  
Nagpur, C. P.

Deshpande, (Mrs.) I. V.  
G. A., Indian Women's University, 1939  
Poona, Bombay Province

Dhopeshwarkar, V. H.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1946  
Bombay City

Dias, (Miss) V. M.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1947  
Santa-Cruz, Goa

Gandhi, (Miss) F. R.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1946  
Bulsar, Bombay Province

Gokhale, S. D.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1946  
Poona, Bombay Province

Hadi, M. A.  
B. A., Osmania University, 1945  
M. A., „ „ 1947  
Aurangabad, Hyderabad State (Dn.)

Jebaraj, (Rev.) A. G.  
B. A., Madras University, 1927  
B. D., Serampore University, 1933  
Palamcottah, Madras Province

Joshi, (Miss) S. M.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1942  
B. T., „ „ 1947  
Poona, Bombay Province

Kalle, (Miss) I. R.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1947  
Ahmednagar, Bombay Province

Kanal, (Miss) U. R.  
B. A., Punjab University, 1943  
M. A., Bombay University, 1947  
Ferozepore, Punjab

Kidwai, S. A.  
B. A., Lucknow University, 1946  
Hyderabad City, Hyderabad State (Dn.)

Kuruwa, U. J.  
B. A., Bombay University, 1947  
Bombay City

Mathur, A. S.  
B. A., Agra University, 1943  
M. A., „ „ 1945  
Shikohabad, U. P.

Muthuvenkataraman, K.  
Antya Diploma, Viswa Bharati, 1947  
, Madura, Madras Province

Nargundkar, (Miss) S. H.  
B. A., Nagpur University, 1942  
Nagpur, C. P.

Naimuddin, M.  
B. A., Delhi University, 1944  
M. A., „ „ 1946  
Delhi

Nizamuddin, S.  
B. A., Osmania University, 1946  
Hyderabad City, Hyderabad State (Dn.)

Permar, (Miss) K.  
B. A., Delhi University, 1946  
Delhi

Purkayastha, D. L.  
B. A., Calcutta University, 1945  
Karimganj, Assam

Razavi, S. A. H.  
B. A., Osmania University, 1944  
Hyderabad City, Hyderabad State (Dn.)

Sharma, V.  
B. A., Punjab University, 1944  
Lyallpur, Punjab

Thangavelu, (Miss) R. •  
B. A., Madras University, 1944  
Coonoor, Madras Presidency

Vaidya, (Miss) K. M.  
B. A., Nagpur University, 1942  
M. A., „ „ 1945  
B. Music, Bhatkhande University of Indian  
Music, Lucknow, 1944  
Nagpur, C. P.

\*Warden, B. H.  
Bombay City

#### STUDENTS—PAST AND PRESENT

Mr. Ahmed, F. M. ('47) has joined the Office of the Adviser for Tribes and Backward Communities, Hyderabad (Dn.), as Social Service Officer.

Mr. Ananthanarayanan, P. S. ('40) has returned to India after successfully completing his studies at the University of Toronto.

Miss Anklesaria, R. P. ('47) has been recently added to the case work staff of the Central Investigation Bureau of the Liaison Committee for Parsi Charity Organisation, Bombay.

Mr. Barnabas John ('38) who until recently was Senior Rehabilitation Officer, Poona, has been appointed Assistant Secre-

tary to the Prohibition Board of the Government of Bombay.

Miss Batliwala, B. M. ('47) has been added to the Central Investigation Bureau of the Liaison Committee for Parsi Charity Organisation, Bombay, as Family Case Worker.

Miss Bharucha, B. D. ('46) has been appointed Medical Social Worker of the J. J. Hospital, Bombay, in place of Miss Deraï, A. F. who has accepted another post. Miss Bharucha is receiving training in this specialized field under Miss Blakey, Visiting Professor of Medical Social Work.

Mr. Chatterji, B. ('45) has joined the staff of the Institute as Field Work Assistant.

Miss Chinniah, M. ('46) has been appointed Psychiatric Social Worker, Mental Hospital, Angoda, Ceylon.

Mr. Deodhar, L. D. ('46) is continuing his socio-economic survey of workers employed in the sugar industry in the Province of Bombay.

Miss Desai, A. F. ('42) has resigned as Lady Almoner of the J. J. Hospital to take the position as Joint Secretary of the Stri Zarathosti Mandal, and the Sir Ratan Tata Industrial Institute Bombay.

Mr. Dighe, K. G. ('42) formerly Probation Officer of the Children's Aid Society, Bombay, has now been promoted to the position of Chief Probation Officer.

Mr. Katticaran, G. J. ('46) has been recently appointed as Labour Officer by the Government of Madras and is now posted at Coonoor.

Mr. Khandekar, P. R. ('44) has been appointed Labour Officer, Rewa State, Central India.

Mr. Krishnaswami, C. S. (Class '48) has contributed an article on "Child Welfare in Industry" to *The Indian Textile Journal*, Vol. LVII, No. 683 (August, 1947).

Mr. Kulkarni, D. V. ('38) has recently returned to India after successfully completing his studies at the New York School of Social Work, New York.

Mr. Kulkarni, P. D. ('46) is working as Case Investigator with the Sheriff's S. S. Ramdas Relief Committee, Bombay. His "Scheme for Universal Literacy and Adult Education" was published in *The Indian Journal of Adult Education*, Vol. VIII, No. 3 (May, 1947).

Mrs. Kurup, T. ('45) has been appointed Lady Inspector of Factories by the Government of Travancore, and is now posted at Trivandrum.

Miss Kutar, M. J. ('47) has joined the staff of the School for Children in Need of Special Care, Bombay. This school is meant for educating the mentally handicapped.

Mr. Mampilly Cherian, J. ('42) has been appointed Labour and Welfare Officer of the Tata Mills Limited, Bombay.

Miss Marr, P. ('46) has joined the staff of the National Y. W. C. A. School of Social Work, Delhi.

Mr. Mathew, C. T. ('47) has contributed an article on "Labour Welfare—Its Principles and Objectives" to *The Indian Textile Journal*, Vol. LVII, No. 681 (June, 1947).

Mr. Mishra, H. M. (Class '48) has contributed two articles on "Planning Bombay's Milk Supply" to *Chaya*. The articles appeared in Vol. V. No. 23 (February, 1947), and No. 25 (March, 1947).

Mr. Mukerjee, A. K. ('46) has been appointed Labour Welfare Officer, Burmah Oil Company, Syriam, Burma.

Mr. Nair, P. K. ('47) has been appointed Labour Officer by the Government of Madras and is now posted at Calicut.

Mr. Panakal, J. A. ('47) is now receiving training at the Department of Economics and Statistics, Tata Industries Limited, Bombay.

Mr. Panakal, J. J. ('46) Assistant Secretary of the Institute, is now working as Research Assistant with the Bureau of Research and Publications.

Mr. Patil, W. D. G. ('42) has been appointed Superintendent of the Remand Home of the Children's Aid Society, Bombay.

Mr. Pillay, G. S. ('45) has been appointed Labour Welfare Officer by the Government of Travancore, and is now posted at Alleppey.

Mrs. Rajadyaksha, K. (Miss Naik, K.) ('42) has been appointed Medical Social Worker of the Cama and Albless Hospitals, Bombay. She is now receiving training in this specialised field under Miss Lois Blakey, Visiting Professor of Medical Social Work.

Mr. Randeria, K. N. ('47) has been appointed Welfare Organiser of the Zorastrian Welfare Association, Bombay. He is also serving as a Case Worker with the Central Investigation Bureau of the Liaison Committee for Parsi Charity Organisation, Bombay. A series of articles by him on "Play Centre Organisation" and "Social Case Work" appeared in the issues for the months of July and August, 1947, of *The Kaiser-i-Hind*, *The Jam-e-Jamshed*, and *The Mumbai Vartaman*.

Mr. Rao Gopalakrishna, T. (Class '48) has contributed an article on "A Plea for Industrial Health Services in India" to *The Indian Textile Journal*, Vol. LVII, No. 680 (May, 1947). Mr. Rao has been elected president of the Students' Union for the first term of the academic year 1947-1948.

Mr. Roy, B. K. ('46) is now Secretary of the Social Service League, Lucknow.

Mr. Rochlani, S. P. ('47) has been appointed Lady Welfare Officer by the Karachi Municipal Corporation, Karachi.

Mr. Sambasivan, K. S. ('46) has been appointed Labour Welfare Officer by The Amalgamated Tea Estates Company Limited, Pollachi, South India.

Mr. Shaikh, R. A. ('45) who was working as Case Investigator with the Sheriff's S. S. Ramdas Relief Committee, Bombay, has been temporarily appointed Officiating Assistant Labour Officer by the Government of Bombay, and is now posted in Bombay.

Mr. Shroff, B. D. ('47) has joined the Svadeshi Mills Limited, Kurla, Bombay, as Assistant Labour and Welfare Officer.

Mr. Singh Wilfred ('40) has been appointed Superintendent of the Delhi Poor House, Delhi.

Mr. Sourimuthu, M. (Class '48) has contributed an article on "Breaking or Making the Family" to *The Examiner*, Vol. 98, No. 17 (April 26, 1947).

Miss Taraporewala, D. M. ('44) has joined the staff of the Institute as Field Work Assistant.

Mr. Thomas, P. T. ('46) is now working with the Friends' Service Unit, Calcutta.

Mr. Velayudhan, C. K. ('38) has been appointed Labour Officer by the Government of Madras, and is now posted at Madura.

Miss Vyas, I. ('47) is recently married to Mr. Pinakin Patel. We wish the new couple all success, happiness and long life.

Mr. Zachariah, K. A. ('46) has joined the University School of Economics and Sociology, Bombay.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*"Camping For Crippled Children."* Edited by Harry H. Howett. Elyria : The National Society for Crippled Children and Adults, Incorporated, 1945. Pp. XX + 120.

It is with a good deal of hesitation that I undertook the offer of reviewing this small but interesting book. Nowhere in this country does a school for orthopedic children exist, nor is there any authentic record of the extent and the incidence of this physical disability in India. Encountered by these unpleasant facts, one is likely to nurse some misgiving about the utility as well as the wisdom of discussing materials on organized camping for crippled children.

The first point about this book, which has a powerful impression on the mind of a reader is the frank and categorical statement that all, whether physically normal or physically handicapped, should be accorded the same rights and opportunities as far as these are feasible in terms of the receptive capacity of an individual. No programme for the handicapped can be successfully organized in the absence of an unreserved acceptance by the community of this basic philosophy of equality of opportunity. This supremely important concept as unfolded in the following assertion of Dr. W. H. Klusmann, the President of the American Camping Association, set forth in the foreword of the book, should be carefully treasured by all, particularly by those engaged in work with the handicapped :

"The rocks, the rills and templed hills ; the healing fragrance of the woods ; the beauties of lake and coastline ; the open air ; the clean blue sky ; these belong to all people, and the right to enjoy them is the heritage of every child."

It is rather too often that camping is completely indented with its recreational

aspects and its great educational bearings are ignored by the popular mind. One of the fundamental principles of educational psychology is that children learn most when they are not aware of the fact that they are subjected to the processes of learning. The book under review rightly emphasizes the manifold educational values of camping and narrates the fascinating tale of the development of camping for crippled children from both the educational and recreational standpoints.

The first camp for normal children in the United States opened in 1888, while 1899 saw the inauguration of the first camp for crippled children. The importance and the popularity of the latter type of camp may be measured by the consideration that by 1944 there were 56 camps serving 3,518 orthopedic children in America.

It is quite obvious that certain camping procedures and techniques have to be modified to meet the peculiar requirements of the crippled, and these modifications have been noted in the book rather punctiliously. The following five varieties of camping for this section of the physically handicapped have been recognized and enumerated :—

1. Individual children camping with physically normal children ;
2. Attending in groups with separate programmes in camps for able-bodied children ;
3. Occupying camp facilities when not in use by the physically normal ;

4. Using camps specially established and operated for crippled children ; and
5. Going to a day camp and returning home each night.

The book is sure to be an extremely useful guide for those wishing to organize this kind of camp as well as for those planning to serve as directors, counsellors, and other staff personnel. The parents of crippled children will also derive immense benefit out of this compendium. As the frontispiece of this book, there is an outline of a floor plan of a model cabin for this

type of camp. A selective bibliography at the end of each chapter, has enhanced the value of the book. If the book has erred at all, it has done so on the side of too many and, at places, unnecessary details.

It is earnestly hoped that this book will focus the attention of our people on the urgent needs and problems of the millions of much-neglected orthopedic children in India and will lead to the immediate establishment of a number of schools for them

S. C. R.

*Economy of Permanence—A Quest for a Social Order Based on Non-violence.* Part I. By J. C. Kumarappa. Wardha: The All-India Village Industries Association, 1946. Pp. 87, Rs. 2/-.

This is an unusual book in every way. The author develops in his argument a strikingly novel view of life.

The argument proceeds upon an analysis of the various types of economy in nature : the parasitic economy, based out and out upon violence ; the predatory economy, where a unit in nature benefits itself without conferring any advantage upon the other unit ; the economy of enterprise, where in the very process of drawing benefit the unit confers advantage upon the other unit also ; the economy of gregation, in which urge of immediate gain gets rationalised into planning for future requirements ; and the economy of service, where the unit completely merges its self-interest into the interest of the whole. The principles underlying the operation of these economies have then been studied in their application to human societies. Thus, a dacoit or robber, who belongs to the parasitic economy, may change his mode of life and set himself up as an absentee landlord, thus rising

into the higher form of the economy of predation. Or he may decide to make an honest living as an agriculturist or as an artisan, and climb up to the still higher form of the economy of enterprise. If he feeds with his income some dependent members, he reaches the stage of the economy of gregation ; by working in the service of the national cause he can attain the highest type of economy, the economy of service.

The author has given in a tabular form the peculiar mental and practical characteristics of the various economies as they become operative in their application to man, and has sought to work out criteria of judgment, scales of values, by which standards of living may be assessed. Parasitic economy builds a house of imitation in which personality finds no expression at all ; predatory economics builds a house of adoption of which the rule is "eat, drink, and be merry ;" the economy of enterprise builds a house of material creations following the maxim "every man for himself and devil take the hindmost."

It is only the economy of gregation and the economy of service which will enable the raising of a house of social innovations and ultimately of sublimation

In the context of the author's argument, the highest and most permanent form of economy is that in which the governing factor is not self-interest but rather altruistic interest. Only a detached attitude of life independent of personal feelings can form a satisfactory basis for a permanent order of things. But is such an attitude capable of attainment by the large mass of humanity which constitutes an economic society? This is a question which will always be answered differently by the idealist and by the realist sociologist.

The author believes in planning, but not in a planning which seeks to deprive the human being of his right to choose his own method of living. Regimentation may have value where the objective is the efficient production of things rather than the development of human personality; it has no place in an economy of permanence. The plan upon which an economy of permanence can be built must be properly formulated in terms of work and the capacity and nature of human beings for whom the work is intended. This is an intriguing approach, and one must look forward to the publication of the second part of the book in which the author promises to give an outline of his plan.

Bool Chand.

# ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WORK

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

JAMSHED NUSSEERWANJEE

The sessions of the All India Conference of Social Work were held from the 6th to 9th November 1947. Mr. Jamshed Nusseerwanjee, ex-Mayor of Karachi, presided. The presidential address is printed below.

With the honour and privilege of presiding at an important gathering like this All-India Conference of Social Work, goes also a sense of responsibility. And this weighs heavily for two reasons: First, because one feels keenly conscious of one's own shortcomings for the task. Secondly, there are around experts with All-India reputation in the field of social sciences, men and women, more competent to fill this noble chair. However, the choice is made and has been gratefully accepted.

Social work in our country in modern times is a stupendous task. Many factors have contributed to the complexity of the problem. And yet it is one that demands immediate attention, especially in these days of social insecurity created by so many events in the country. In a time of upheavals whether political or social, social services constitute as important a national unit as fighting forces in the ordinary sense of the word; for while one battles on geographical frontiers to keep out the enemy, the other has its work on social frontiers to preserve human values without which life would not be worth living. Hence the convening of a conference like the present one is opportune and not a day too early. For the country needs the strength, love and service of all its people, to help it to tide over difficulties with the minimum of pain and misery. The task of re-installing security demands a steady co-operation between the State and the people, it needs a right social outlook, a practical technique, human understanding, strong organisation and dedication. Emo-

tional waves do not constitute the strength in social work, for very soon this enthusiasm cools down and is followed by feelings of tiredness and indifference.

What does social work imply in India? What is its scope? What type of agency does it need to work its details? What has so far been done in this field in the country? What is the next step? These are the questions which need urgent attention and study.

To think of social work in India is to come to grips with numerous problems that are staggering. Indeed it seems as if all the ills of society have aggregated in their intensity amidst us. There is the appalling poverty giving rise to disease, malnutrition, and moral degeneracy. There is the problem of insanity and juvenile delinquency, enfeebled motherhood, neglected, unwanted children, the disabled, the crippled, the illiterate, the beggar, the criminal, the oppressed and the innocent in the hands of the profiteer, the black-marketeer, and the blood-sucking money-lender who loans out at 100, 200 and 500 per cent interest. There again is the problem of the unnoticed, unencouraged youth who could be made a useful citizen but who is neglected and denied the opportunity to be trained into useful citizenship.

For so stupendous a task we need a strong agency to work out various schemes. And this can only be supplied by the State and its local bodies. Individual effort at its best can but fall far short of the requirements, and can only be useful as a strong co-ordinating unit. As things exist in our



country, there has been little or no co-ordination between the State and private endeavours. This is so because the State and local bodies believe that social service is outside their scope. A State is ordinarily supposed to be an institution of administration for the safety, defence and prosperity of the country. A local body is expected to be at its best, a means of water-supply, road-cleaning, an administration for sanitation, some dispensaries and hospitals, to extinguish fires when they occur and last, but the most important, an institution of tax collection to meet all expenses. This has been a very unfortunate one-sided development of both the States and local bodies in our country. The fundamental fact has been missed that States and local bodies are meant to be Temples of Social Service, not machines to manage certain well-defined departments of necessary human needs. No doubt we need administrators but an administrator who is not, or cannot be, a devotee in the Temple of Service can never play the right role in the rhythmic organism of life to bring joy and happiness in the hearts of the people. Our modern social work is more artificial, half-hearted, mechanical, emotional and therefore temporary and patronising. Many a time it is irritable and irksome to those to whom it is offered.

While the State has worked thus mechanically, the individual has had a different approach. To help, to be useful to their brothers and sisters is a natural aptitude of the individual. With these instincts, institutions have grown up here and there, some few for serving the country as a whole, some to serve people of different provinces and districts and more to serve particular communities and sections because the donors have built, established and donated such institutions for the benefit of their own communities.

The city of Bombay has played a very great part in building such charitable institutions and have always led the whole country. It has produced charitable and philanthropic women and men and some servants of the country whose names will ever be remembered with gratitude. There also exist other institutions offering scope for social work in other cities and parts of the country—now the two Dominions—and in several States, carrying out useful work. A fairly good number of social workers are employed all round the country of whom only a few are wholly and fully dedicated to the service of their fellow-men.

The questions which arise out of all the social work of the past and present and out of experiences gained, are "Is it enough?" "Is social work in our country on the right track?" The answers to both these questions are quite clear. What has been done and is being done is very very little. It is also obvious that social work in our country needs a totally different method, a new approach.

If the statistical figures of the amount of money and energy spent in last 30 to 40 years in our country are worked out and measured and the results calculated and recorded, it would be easy to find out where we have erred, where we need to apply changes and what are our real needs. It would be revealed to us that we have as yet only touched the problem superficially.

In this vast country of two Dominions, several Provinces, so many States, municipalities, local bodies, charitable institutions, trusts and thousands of individual social workers, we yet find ourselves in the midst of poverty, ignorance and dirt so rampant that the problems appear out of control. This is because the work is unor-

ganised, unco-ordinated and undertaken by untrained workers. The donor believes that with the giving of charity his work has ended, but there is no effort to see that the inflow of wealth continues to keep the institution running. The worker labours for some time in enthusiasm, and when funds run low and no more is forthcoming, he is discouraged and his enthusiasm is damped. The huge buildings remain - monuments of noble work undertaken so warmly but with weak foundations.

Can private charities and institutions built up here and there solve or tackle these huge problems? The present methods of charity and social work can go on for two centuries, but miseries will never cease, will continue to increase. Millions and millions of rupees will have been spent and tons of energy will have been wasted. Poverty, feebleness, ill-health, infirmity will increase and the world will be a human wreckage for many, and a place of reckless pleasures for the few.

The Parsee community gives a clear illustration of this state of affairs. It has charitable institutions of various types in almost every quarter of this city. It has donated, for a small community of not more than 75,000 persons in Bombay, between 15 to 40 lakhs per year on an average for the last 20 years or more. With what result? There is no visible decrease of poverty or misery. It is all the time only "Relief and Relief" from this or that, escaping from one ill to another. To give in charities, to supply essential needs is not the main object of social work; but to give opportunities, amenities and right guidance to those who lack these to enable them to take a step forward in life is the true aim.

If there had been inspired and genuine social work throughout the country, the

present day communal struggles, labour problem, profiteering and black-marketing would have been very much less and the country could have been saved from considerable misery. But there is no time to mourn or shed tears. No thing short of organised and trained social work with a large band of devoted and dedicated missionaries of social work can bring the country out from its present chaos. Who is to begin it? Present legislative machinery to administrate states and local bodies protect chiefly the capitalists. It will and must bring ruin and chaos.

The British rule failed because it administered and legislated mostly for the capitalist of the country without giving any impetus to social work leaving it entirely to private organizations and satisfying large donors here and there with titles and praises. The new Governments of our two Dominions must realise, and realise very quickly that a large scale intelligent drive has to be made to co-ordinate Governments, States, local bodies, private efforts at social work and dedicated missionaries of social work to save the country from greater miseries. If not, their failure will be greater than that of the British rule.

Today, rajas, maharajas, nawabs and capitalists are busy manipulating their capital where they can save income tax or keep their investments more safe. They fly their capital from one dominion to another, from one country to another in expectation of its safety. Little do they realise that nature quietly smiles and plans exactly what is to be the final end of that capital. It is time for all to open their eyes more widely.

## II

The scope of this conference is very ably drafted and split up for discussion in 8 sections, which cover several problems of

social work in the country. A hurried glance at some of these with some personal suggestions and views is the subject of the second part of this address.

### Section I

*State and social service.*—A total state planning and co-ordinating is the only way if the country is to remain in peace and prosperity. Having achieved "Liberty" it can only be kept up and maintained by "equality and fraternity" without which liberty has no meaning, no purpose. If this is not done, our liberty itself is in danger. For social work in total and complete form, all problems have to be taken into consideration—wages, earnings, housing, clothing, feeding, infirmity, old age, insanity, health, education, nutrition, leisure and relaxation, motherhood, infantile diseases and mortality, cattle welfare, milk production, food production and several other vital needs of the country. All these can be catalogued and considered carefully. It will be necessary to have these different problems discussed and full reports obtained through a central committee of experts for the whole country, and provincial committees for each Province simultaneously as was done some years ago for the banking problems. A co-ordinating policy for the Central and Provincial Governments with a scope for local bodies and municipal corporations, and allowing therein the fullest opportunities also to private charities to fit in with the scheme, will make ideal planning for practical social service and work. In our country there are brains and hearts. The new liberty has created imagination and will for the happiness of the country and the present stage full of enthusiasm is the best opportunity.

Side by side with this co-ordination the country should be prepared to realise its duties. Capitalists, the rich, millionaires and multi-millionaires have to be persuaded

and trained to part with a portion of their wealth in the form of taxations or duties to provide for this total social work of the country. They must be made to realise that this is the safest way to safeguard the remaining portion of their capital and a right royal middle path to balance the affairs of life.

*How shall we set about the task?*—One of the methods should be a special monetary fund or bank where an initial sum from a capital wealth levy of 5 to 25 per cent from each citizen, graded according to recommendations of a special committee, be deposited and an annual income both from Government realisations and special taxes can be added. Those who have more than they need, have to see the "Signs of the Times." Only a few days ago our great Premier, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, said at Allahabad that social democracy was the ideal of Hindustan. Pakistan has the same ideals. If this can be fulfilled by willing co-operation, it will avoid chaos, struggles and will safeguard capital sufficiently and more for the comfortable needs of those who have it. If it has to be forced, it will not lead to social democracy, but to communism. Many feel that this is far away, it cannot happen. But when things happen, they happen suddenly. An exodus from one province to another of 20 to 40 lakhs of persons was never dreamt of a week before 15th August, 1947. A complete change of property, of wealth, a complete turn in life from richness to poverty for thousands and lakhs of people was not even imagined. Yet it has happened. Sitting in Bombay it can never be realised what chaos, miseries, pains, sufferings, bitterness it has meant. Capital, wealth, trade, business, palatial houses, furniture, cars and all such modern comforts of life lost almost overnight. When one sees institutions built with love and hard labour, destroyed, devastated, empty, thou-

sands and lakhs homeless, jobless, rooted out of employment, trade and profession, motherless, fatherless, without relations, friendless, aimless,—all this happening within 3 weeks, one is dazed. Only total social service can save our countrymen from such calamities in future. Communal or sectional work, howsoever noble, must separate and one day collapse through hatred, bitterness and wars. Those who can see, let them learn to be human and help to bring about social democracy willingly, happily, joyfully admitting the right of each human being to live happily in the world.

*Health services.*—Health services have a prominent place amidst total State services. Yet in this country so little has been done and so much yet remains to be done. The vitality of most of our countrymen and women is sapped and low, millions die young, suffering and ailing from diseases which could have been avoided by care, knowledge, education, and treatment. So far it has been left to the individual to find out the best means he can to get educated, to safeguard himself from diseases or to find out means to be cured. Few municipalities here and there have certain laws of sanitation, some dispensaries and hospitals. Health has been commercialised and belief in drugs has spread everywhere opening a field for a number of companies to advertise and sell their drugs at 20 and 50 times more than the cost. To give wide knowledge how to secure good health does not seem to be the duty of the health department of the municipalities. We have now begun to recognise compulsory primary education as a minimum for the child. But what about his health? There ought to be a recognition of a minimum at least for health services throughout the country, where a well-planned health programme will cater first to the education of every citizen in personal hygiene. A systematic plan for treatment

of defectives, crippled, disabled has to be made and last but not the least we must be vigilant about the problem of infectious diseases. At present vaccination and inoculations to 'prevent' epidemics or not to allow them to spread are supposed to be the best health services which are being rendered in our country and that too in a few places here and there. It is necessary that a minimum adequate should be fixed for all-round health services in our country, beginning from antenatal period, maternity welfare, defects and disabilities of children and should be continued for different periods of life. For each period a minimum adequate should be prescribed. Health agencies should be increased all round for treatment and care of the sick with hospitals and clinics made freely accessible and economical to our people. Education on health in schools through charts, movies, exhibitions, and also to mothers is essential. Cheaper, simpler and natural methods of cure are more important. Modern civilisation is dragging us to such costlier methods of treatment of diseases and the sick that it will become impossible for any State in the world to afford it. Our country is too poor to accept completely modern researches in drugs and treatment. If our ancient science of *Ayurvedic* and *Unani* is revived and if education is given on these methods with science and research added, simpler and less costly methods of cure could be evolved, and universally accepted. Homeopathy and nature methods of cure and treatment have also a great scope in our country, because they are much cheaper and no less effective if properly and scientifically offered. Much has been said and written about health insurance in our country both voluntary and compulsory. In other countries it has been practised with much success where medical, sanatoriums, sickness, maternity and disablement benefits are being offered. The masses

in our country too will benefit from similar advantages. Here also it will be necessary for a special committee to work hard and give us a report on what lines our country could take up for health insurance. There are arguments against provision of health insurances, but in the end the country will demand what men and women in other countries are enjoying and no time should be lost by us to put our minds together and evolve a rational human system of health insurance.

*Prison reforms.*—The problem of the criminal and prison reforms is one where much advance is made by research and study and where psychology is used to its utmost advantage. This has brought about a new attitude towards the criminal and the law-breaker. It is now realised that there are many social factors which contribute to criminality besides hereditary weaknesses, such as unhealthy environment in early childhood, unhappy home, lack of education resulting in moral and mental under-development and hard economic conditions. This outlook has brought the criminal within the pale of human consideration and sympathy, and prison reform is very slowly but surely, tending more towards reformation of the criminal, than his punishment, at least in other countries. This brings the question under two heads:

- (1) To utilise this new knowledge and understanding in dealing with the criminal.
- (2) To eradicate those causes, hereditary and environmental, which encourage criminality.

To this let the man-in-the-street add his humanity and kindness. For it is the individual's attitude towards the prisoner both when in and after he leaves the prison-house that will count a long way in

his improvement, and his return to a cultured and civilized society. Very little of all this is yet introduced in our country, but it is hoped that these new reforms will soon find a place both in the prison-house and prison legislation.

*Adult education.*—In a country like ours with illiteracy so widespread and ignorance sitting at the roots of all our problems adult education appears to be a salient remedy, and yet, its application in this, as in most other fields, has been unsystematic and haphazard, making the experiment costly and fruitless. What we have not realised is the fact that the problem of adult education in India is not necessarily the same as the problem in other—especially western countries. While the fundamental need is the same, the social structure, mental development, range of receptivity, level of emotional and intellectual progress differ and hence must differ also the method. A great difficulty that has been experienced by the social worker in this field is the unwillingness of the adult to be educated or made literate. That is because the adult does not feel that education will touch his interests in any way, that his effort will have some real value in his improvement and well-being. The worker therefore must study the adult and find out his interests and begin the education in that subject which interests him. It is only then that the adult will realise the value of such education. The brain-trust of the country must tackle the problem efficiently and yet with sufficient simplicity and speed to meet its extent in numbers and urgency. Psychology will play an important role in its success in its application as a method and system.

*Social security.*—Social security is catching the mind of the people more seriously than any other phrase in the present time. The reports of experiments with various

schemes, statements of leaders at conferences, etc., are widely read with greater interest by men and women throughout the world. In a country like ours mainly inhabited by poor men, it must attract considerable interest and create feelings of hope, at the same time making us realise that nothing has been done by us for the millions living in ignorance, poverty and disease. Figures and facts about the needs of our country in this direction have been worked out by well-known authors by diligent research. In an address like this, it is difficult to quote facts and figures, but the country is looking forward keenly and it must be forcibly realised that the success of the Governments of both our Dominions and States will depend upon such schemes as can be made to meet unemployment, sickness insurance, old age pension or assistance, compensations for workmen, supply of necessities for dependent mothers and children, and such other services enforced by legislation wherever necessary.

## Section II

*Rural community development.*—Professor K. N. Vaswani in one of his pamphlets—*Agricultural Economics in India*—gives a true picture of our villages and the rural community.

“He who has been producing for all, has been left nothing that he may eat; he who has been clothing all has nothing to clothe himself with; the source of wealth to others, he is without wealth; the son of the soil, he is without a patch of land that he can call his own; indebted as we all are to him, for food and cloth and the raw materials of our industries, the commodities for our trade and commerce, it is he who bears the great crushing burden of debt on his bent shoulders; taxing himself to the utmost to make both ends meet, with toiling and seeking to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, he, is it again, who is

taxed most, paying duty even on his bit of salt, while we enjoy exemption from income-tax, if we earn but Rs. 2,500 a year, as though he earns more.”

We have about 7,00,000 villages in this country as against only about 1,800 cities and towns. It is apparent therefore that the real India exists in our villages, fortunately uninfluenced yet by western civilization, and yet so neglected as to call forth the above picture. The village is an important factor in India's economic development. It is also the custodian of our culture and traditions. Any scheme therefore of India's betterment can only begin in the villages. And it is only when the rural community is protected and well-looked after that India's regeneration will truly begin.

To tackle a single village in India means to put total social service into practice. There will be the question of health and cleanliness, removal of filth, sanitation, child education, housing, roads, veterinary aid, water supply and, above all, means of livelihood—one of the major problems of the villages due to economic exploitation of the peasantry. Herein social workers will find scope for all sorts of experiments. Greater agricultural facilities, co-operative marketing, handicraft, weaving, cottage industries, growing vegetable, fruit and flower gardens, dairy farms and manufacturing of pure milk products, all these will help to improve the villager's economic condition and make him self-supporting and hence self-respecting.

The problem does not end here. For there is the question of leisure which if not well-utilized can be made ill use of. Public libraries and reading rooms, playgrounds, recreation clubs, education through the movies, folk-song and folk-dance, these must formulate the life of leisure of our village communities if we

are to drag them away from gossip, superstition and wrong habits.

So far we have been tinkering with the problem, applying haphazard methods, under untrained and often vain social workers. The State must now step in and begin, with whatever resources available, experiments in total social service in our villages.

*Aboriginal welfare.*—The problem of aboriginal welfare has now come up in front, like most of our other social problems which lay festering below till tyranny and exploitation brought them on the surface through revolution and aggressiveness.

Researches in this problem reveal that aborigines, far from being criminal and low class as is believed to be due to the mistakes of a few, are a community possessing ancient and distinctive culture, religion and traditions. This culture is something superb in many respects, colourful, artistic and in social status and freedom, extremely democratic.

One may ask how these tribes are so enslaved and exploited politically. Extremely simple-minded, living in secluded colonies, happy and contented, they gradually lost ground to land hunters and oppressors who with their dominating attitude and grabbing methods soon overpowered their mastery of land. Ignorance of language, laws and modes of their invaders kept these classes subdued, while the selfishness and intentional neglect of their oppressors did nothing to ameliorate their condition.

Recently social service efforts have again been directed to their welfare with outstanding results. The problem needs above all a sympathetic and friendly approach, and understanding of aboriginal culture and an appreciation of his art and traditions. Patient efforts and a close

brotherly contact will soon stir up sentiments of friendliness in these vast numbers of our countrymen.

*Labour.*—The problem of labour is in everyone's mind these days, but unfortunately not because we have become conscious of its rights and needs, but because a long-term injustice and exploitation have created a world-wide labour revolt, thus thrusting the problem on unwilling ears. Strikes and hartals spring up periodically, demanding economic and social reforms of various kinds.

A time has come when we must give a rational and well-planned reform to this department of society, and not leave the problem to the fads and whims or scrappy compensations of some directors, zamindars or industrialists. A satisfied industrial and agricultural labour is essential to production in our manufacturing concerns and agricultural fields. A minimum of all amenities of life must be gratefully supplied to a class by whose toil and sweat we enjoy the luxuries of life.

Many labour problems confront us today, wages, and women and child labour being the outstanding ones. Nothing but understanding and sympathy of the haves, for the have-nots will bring about a satisfactory solution. Those who believe that by exploiting power through central and provincial legislatures and through placing supporters in ministerial seats and other high offices they will succeed in continuing to exploit labour must remember that "the tears of the poor undermine the thrones of kings." They must realise that labourers are also human beings whom we cannot drive too far without reaping fatal results. By supplying their 'minimum budget' and by constant and humane touch with his employees, an employer will succeed far more in gaining his co-

operation in work than by use of force or through legislation. It is only then that there will be no room left for the agitators who are so often criticised by employers.

Let a just legislation and wide sympathy unite to solve this imminent peril in the country.

### Section III

*Family and child welfare services.*—The main problems which are to be considered by this section of the conference are maternity and child welfare, education for marriage and family life, child guidance, juvenile delinquency and the problem of the dependent and neglected child. These are problems accentuated by the modern civilization (or uncivilization). In ancient India these problems did not exist. Simple as people were in those days, they were yet cultured and refined and possessed sound knowledge on many subjects given from generation to generation. Maternity to hard working mothers was not a problem. Marriages and family life were happy and produced mainly happy children who were brought up and trained amid healthy surroundings. Juvenile delinquency was rare and children were not at any time kept dependent or neglected. All this was due to simpler, economic, friendly and cheaper ways of life. The troubles have started since the last 200 years and have increased to such proportion that all these problems require careful handling. The percentages of deaths during maternity and infancy, unhappy marriages increasing day by day resulting in quarrels, separations and divorces, children with defects and peculiarities and mentally retarded, unwanted children created through passions of men and women, are increasing to such an extent that these problems have become major and important subjects in the city and town life. These problems are tragic and have caused youths to shrink from marriages and family life. If they do marry

and have family life, they take them as unavoidable evils. Psychology and medical aids are being recommended and tried and legislation in different countries is being enacted to enable people to face these problems. But much more is required, — to educate men, women and children to understand the responsibilities and needs of family life, and the place of the family unit in society. Most of these evils exist because of economic conditions in cities and towns where the standard of living is much higher than the income of the people and where a good income is wasted on reckless pleasures and so-called comforts, which create additional problems, resulting in abortion, maternal sickness, unhappy married life, super-sensitive children, delinquent juveniles and last but not the least, dependent and unwanted children. These problems can only be solved by ancient methods newly applied, of right living, taught by sages and rishis, helped by the light of science, medicine and psychology. To meet the problem scientifically alone is not enough. Where emotions have a strong play, faith and noble thoughts play a greater part.

### Section IV

*Youth organization.*—Youth organizations to utilise their capacities in the well-being of a nation are increasing. Many attempts are being made to create youth movements, to bind youths together in friendship, to afford them health and vitality and make them useful for the service of humanity. Youth is our greatest asset. It is unfortunate that in these days neglect of the youth has instilled in them racial discrimination and communal feelings. One sees this in colleges, in schools and on the play-ground. This unfortunate tendency has created a very great problem. When communal feelings started some years ago, it was hoped that a new generation will change that aspect, but that hope has been completely shattered.



There is no time here to enter into reasons, but it is vital that leaders of the country and various communities view this subject with some gravity and make earnest efforts to build fraternity of youths which will bring to the country friendliness and brotherliness which are so sorely necessary in our country. Our outlook hitherto has been narrow, each community desiring for their youths good jobs, comfortable life, and good earnings with or without merit; schools and colleges are built for individual communities, sporting teams divided on communal lines, places of recreation separated for different communities, special cups and scholarships marked for separate faiths, bitterness created in speeches of elders, *moulvis* and priests against communities other than their own are all ugly signs which create perverted youths. Another youth problem is ignorance of the knowledge of the functions of body and mind. This is so colossal that it is creating problems beyond control. Another problem is that of frustrated youths, who see with their own eyes that their brilliancy in education, hard work, the time they gave to studies in apprenticeship have all been in vain, and the opportunities which should be theirs by right, were given to others of much less education and genius because they had money or influence to help them on. We must save the youths from frustration and disappointment, and harness their enthusiasm to create a beautiful world. But who has got the time to look into these matters and feel for them? Everyone feels for his son and daughter and some for his community youths. Let youths themselves solve the problem with the slogan "Youths of the country, unite, for your sake, for your country's sake."

### Section V

*The handicapped and the maladjusted.*—We now come to the problem of the handicapped and the maladjusted, those who

through various factors in life like wrong or no education, heredity, unhealthy environment, national crisis like wars, accidents and economic conditions find themselves physically and mentally handicapped to pursue their normal occupations in society. In other countries where problems like these have cropped up due to the last two World Wars and other causes have made useful experiments in rehabilitation of these unfortunate people. For what is urgently needed is not to supply these people with livelihood in the form of pensions and compensations, charity and housing but to readjust them in social functions of life and livelihood, giving such aid as is required in each case.

Some of these such as lepers have to be segregated, and yet helped intelligently and sympathetically. Others with physical handicaps of another kind like the blind, lame, crippled have to be fitted to some work where their physical disability does not hamper them. Mentally deficient brethren need an educational and psychological approach.

Simple and wise ways of life propagated through right education to parents and children, minimise the increase of this class of society's unfortunates.

*Prostitutes.*—The problem of prostitutes is truly tragic. Prostitutes are the creation of our civilization and so-called society. No woman would dream of entering into such a profession unless she has been driven to it by man with ill-treatment, indifference and misguidance. It is not enough to segregate this class. What is needed is society's right attitude towards women. In the city of Karachi once a move was made to remove them and take them outside the city. A protest came from these unfortunate ladies and an opportunity was taken to meet and record statements of 118 of them. This experience revealed

facts that some day will make a useful publication for study. An instance may be quoted here—in actual words:

J: Sister, why are you here?

L: Jamshedji, a murderer convicted stands at the gallows; a king sits on his throne, you are sitting in your bungalow; I am sitting here; each one sits and stands where God wills him or her to do so.

J: Sister, God who has sent you here has now arranged for you to come out of this.

L: Jamshedji, where will you take me?

J: Do not be afraid, everything will be arranged for you. You will get your food, clothing and a home. Do come out of this life.

L: But Jamshedji, clothing, food and house are not my problems. I am getting these comfortably even now. Will you take me back into society, to your sister, and allow me to sit down by her side? Will you treat me as a friend?

Jamshedji had no answer to give. He knew how impossible this was with modern society. Friends, these are hard facts. Prostitutes are made by society, driven out, made to suffer and are then offered bits of food or clothing. But is the society prepared to take them back as friends? Will society forget their past? Will society offer them its sons in marriage? Society creates prostitutes, drags them down and then takes pride in its own superiority against these poor uncared for ones, left to the viciousness of men who use them and then make them haggard and unfit for life. The problem and cure both are not in these unfortunate ones, but of and with the society.

*Beggars.*—We have in India about 15 to 20 lakhs of beggars and they constitute a vast problem which is keenly felt but about which very little has been done. Various causes have played their parts in this vast problem—men driven away from work constituting the able bodied beggars, the handicapped forced to these means through lack of any other employment and care provided for them, the waifs and orphans left on streets without orphanages to shelter them, children sold to professional beggars by parents due to economic conditions, *sadhus* and *fakirs*, real and faked, who live by begging and last but the most menacing to society—the idle man, the professional beggar taking these means to earn livelihood without effort.

This classification makes it clear that the problem is not one by itself but is the result of the neglect of the rest of our problems, and solutions speedily applied to this problems will automatically reduce the beggar evil to a minimum. Social neglect has produced the beggar, social vigilance must absorb him back again to healthy conditions of life and livelihood. This seems to be the fundamental remedy. All other remedies—so far suggested like segregation, poor houses, employment, education of beggar children, making begging a legal offence, all these will but temporarily mitigate the evil. They are useful to a degree to solve the present problem but only a total social service will contribute an ultimate remedy.

## Sections VI and VII

*Private philanthropy.*—Naturally a question will arise as to what place private philanthropy and social service efforts have in a total state-organised social service organism. The rightful place will be seen when one can learn to offer these gifts as a part of one's duties to the State. It will take a long time before human mind can

forget the words "Charity," "Donations," "Subscriptions," "Monuments," "Memorials." Feelings in this country especially are much attached to these words, perpetuating names, gaining fame, giving charities as good and holy deeds to earn rest and peace in Heaven, or as religious duties towards one's community or humanity, to please God and his Prophet and to satisfy one's conscience. Yet, it has to be realised that to offer one's surplus wealth to one's State for total social service is more noble, religious and preferable to any other way of parting with one's wealth. Instincts of charity and donations are not to be killed. Only they are required to be diverted to a higher level. A day will come and must come, when this will be understood by all. Then alone private charity, social work and private philanthropy will get a rightful place and fit in the larger national welfare scheme.

One of the functions of a provincial committee suggested in the first section of this address will be, to make a scheme for total service in the province, and so divide the scheme into small sections of work, that a private donor or philanthropist may be able to take up one of the sections and make his philanthropy useful in that direction. Even a humbler and a poorer man can have scope in offering his mite to any of these sections where money is needed and will be needed. Today there are several philanthropists and charitable persons who desire and even have reserved large sums of money for giving away, but they grope in the dark; they are afraid, they do not know in whose hands to entrust their money. They get confused with different suggestions from friends. In certain instances rich persons have died without carrying out their desire of giving large sums in charity in absence of proper planning.

## Section VIII

*Training and equipment of social workers.*—Within this address, suggestions have been made that universities should take up as early as possible the training of social workers. The Tata Institute of Social Sciences has shown the right direction of the usefulness and potentialities of such training. The importance of this education has not yet been realised in our country, and the result is that the nation is suffering without planning and without trained social workers. There are yet a large number in our country who feel that no training is necessary for social work and only feelings of devotion and sympathy are required, but that is not true. Not only education in sociology is necessary, but organising social welfare with scientific treatment, research bureaus, federation of various societies are all necessary steps. Dr. Kewal Motwani, a well-known sociologist, has suggested that all these should be brought under the ægis of one central organisation, an Indian Academy of Social Sciences, which should have annual sessions in the capitals of the Dominions. All high school teachers and college professors should be made to join this academy. His further suggestion is that this academy should have two sections, Research and Training, in permanent sessions, and above all at the top, in the Central Government, there should be, under personal direction of the President or of the Premier of the Dominion, an Indian Science Foundation, comprising of the cream of experts on physical, biological, social, medical and other applied sciences for purposes of quick and efficient mobilization of all social services, for the service of the nation. This training and education of social workers should no longer be delayed, because a large number will be required in the service of the country very soon, if the country has to be saved from tragic con-

sequences of under-social mentality in which a large number of people flounder and collapse as we have seen during the last two months. Indeed one realises now with full intensity how beneficial it would have been had our country some such social service agency in this hour of great crisis. A good deal of this misery brought about by fear, mistrust, selfishness and hatred could have been avoided.

### III

*Missionary spirit.*—Today in this country a large number of men, women and youths exist with earnest longing to dedicate themselves to the cause of human betterment. They yearn and long to find a scope where they can get a simple livelihood and be enabled to work hard not for themselves, but for others. We have proofs of this in abundance. When the call comes, when leadership attracts, when feelings and emotions of service are raised to the highest pitch a large number rush forth to offer help. Today in this country such youths are scattered, leaderless, spending their energy in aimless work which they feel is the cause of the country. These men, women and youths are politically and socially-minded and in them exist a missionary spirit which if well-guided and directed would be a valuable treasure to the social work of the country. They will make the work less costly and more useful being dedicated to the cause of humanity. A number of them are detached, or can be detached from the ties of worldly pleasures, if there are leaders who can lead such lives themselves and can call others to this vital need of the country. In history, social workers with missionary spirit have played a wonderful part and it will be a great mistake on the part of the country to allow such a spirit to be subdued, depressed, curbed and wasted. If they call men, women and youths to serve the country

socially, devotedly and permanently, bands of monks and nuns, *sevaks* and *sevikas* could be gathered not only in hundreds but in thousands from all faiths, castes and creeds. Such missionaries are born and not made. But the selfishness of the world kills such noble instincts from very childhood. Late Dr. Vail, a well-known missionary surgeon of the Miraj Hospital, once questioned, said that missionaries were not obtained in adult age. The eyes of those who sought them fell on children and youths during their school life or in colleges. Such children and youths were selected, trained and guided by the mission and all the expenses were paid for their training and upkeep, and such youths became missionaries giving up everything, devoting all their life to service. Such missionaries are needed in our country, regardless of castes or creeds. The elders could select, guide and become the heads of such missions in different groups in different provinces. These *sevaks* and *sevikas*, and monks and nuns, in whatever circumstances or place they may be called to serve, will be the shining social workers in the cause of humanity. Such missions from our country then can go even to other countries where there is sickness and suffering and make India great, in name and fame all round the world. Such an opportunity of dedication for men, women and youths of the country will create a mighty spiritual force for true Blessing or Grace. This creative spiritual force is our vital need today. Our country cannot become international merely by political links. International means inter-human and our country must achieve that goal. A quotation from Allama Iqbal will be a fitting end to this address. Said the Allama in a New Year's message, "Remember, man can be maintained on this earth only by honouring mankind, and this world will remain a battleground of ferocious beasts of prey

unless and until the educational forces of the whole world are directed towards inculcating in man respect for mankind. National unity is not a very durable force. Only one unity is dependable and that unity is Brotherhood of Man, which is above race, nationality, colour or language. So long as this so-called democracy, this accursed nationalism and this degraded imperialism are not shattered, so long men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God, so long as distinction of race, colour and 'geographical' nationalities are not wiped out completely, they will never be able to lead a happy and contented life, and the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity will never materialise."

Total social service and work, planned for the country, is the only solution. Governments are too keen today to save private enterprises and industries, trade and capital lest these may sabotage the prosperity of the country. The capitalist,

wealthy industrialists, and traders have a place in the country.' But let it not be forgotten that there is a limit beyond which wealth and capital should not be allowed to accumulate, treasured or used for fancy and luxurious living, aimlessly wasting man's power and energy. Governments and capitalists both have to see the "Signs of the Times." They cannot be blind to the forces which are mustering strong. The path of the country can only lie on the principle of "happiness of all" and "happiness to him through whom happiness to others."

Years ago the Mantram given to this country was "*Purna Self-Government*." It took 41 years after its proclamation to achieve it. Let the slogan now be changed, to "*Purna Samaj Seva*," total social service for the country, and let us pray that it may not take 41 years to achieve, and that it may much sooner be achieved to bless the country with its many gifts towards attaining true and lasting happiness. Amen!

# VILLAGE LABOUR FORCE IN THE CITY<sup>1</sup>

J. M. KUMARAPPA

Conditions of living together in industrial cities require new adjustments on the part of villagers. There is a break with traditions and patterns of conduct developed and approved by the village group. Dr. Kumarappa suggests that the city must adjust its arrangements so as to protect the newcomers, and aid them in the struggle to adapt themselves to changed circumstances.

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The lack of a tradition of wise social administration has been the most unfortunate aspect of industrial development in India. We have failed to recognise clearly that the responsibility of any industry or any service is not complete when it affords to itself alone a margin of material advantage. As a result, too long have we been stoically complacent towards human insufficiency, failure and suffering. It is only in recent years, with the pressure of population in industrial towns, that we have begun to appreciate, though not fully, the economic and social significance of housing.

Since the beginning of the present century, Indian cities like Bombay and Calcutta, have doubled and trebled their population; others, like Madras, Madura, Nagpur and Cawnpore have all increased their numbers with amazing rapidity; whilst new towns, like Jamshedpur and Bhatpara have sprung up in areas which were hitherto undeveloped. This sudden growth of population in these industrial cities has been due to the influx of rural migrants in response to the demand for labour. While some centres, like Cawnpore and Ahmedabad, recruit their workers mainly from adjacent districts where population pressure is severe, Bombay and Calcutta attract them from even such distant places as Madras, the United Provinces and the Punjab.

Let us take Bombay as an example. Its labour force is found to be largely

rural, though drawn from all parts of the country. Several thousands of workers from the villages of Deccan, for instance, are employed in Bombay's docks and mills. Rural areas of Kathiawar and Cutch provide the city with large numbers of shopkeepers, domestic servants, clerks and artisans. Surat supplies mostly domestic servants, while from other parts of Gujerat come artisans, clerks and labourers. The Portuguese settlement of Goa provides not only cooks and butlers but also a considerable number of artisans and clerks. Thousands of workers from the United Provinces are employed as weavers in the cotton mills, as artisans in the engineering works and also as coachmen, syces and coolies. The Punjab villages supply Bombay with weavers, mechanics, blacksmiths and above all, with that object of hatred and dread—the Pathan money-lender.

The above facts make it clear that the village artisans, agricultural and field labour classes, which form the lower castes of village society, are the chief sources from which Bombay draws its working classes. Thus, with the introduction of the machine industry and its concentration under the factory system in big cities, began that large-scale exodus of population from the village to the city which has been so striking a characteristic of India's industrial revolution.

So also the transfer of production from the cottage to the factory has stimulated the growth of cities both in number and

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *Indian Labour Problems*, Edited by A. N. Agarwala. Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1947.

size. The city's newness, the rapidity of its growth, the varied cultural background of its people, and the diversity of their activities and interests make social control a perpetual problem. Being relatively new and shaped by forces little known, its development has been largely unanticipated and unplanned. This has given rise to a variety of social problems, the chief among them being that of housing its ever-growing working population and eliminating its blighted areas.

While much has been said during the last few years with reference to slum clearance and the dangers of congestion and overcrowding to public health, little or no attention has been given to the slum dwellers as the vital part of the problem. In point of fact, the congested area is not so important a factor in this problem as the people who live in it. Upon their reaction depends much of the success of any social experiment in housing. The city's social problems must, therefore, be studied against a background which is distinct and unique.

With the congestion of population in our big industrial centres, the social problems associated with the housing of the working classes have also become prominent. Overcrowding, bad housing, defective sanitation, disease and a high death rate are all now outstanding characteristics of our industrial cities. Their industrialisation, to be sure, has not been an unmixed blessing. While stimulating trade and commerce, it has added to the population large numbers from the lower strata of the village community. And they are becoming a constant menace to public welfare, since the cities are not able to cope with the problem of housing them,

much less of training them in the city's standards of life and conduct.

The general shortage of houses in practically all of our industrial areas is so acute that it has led to the distressing problem of overcrowding. Out of every 100 tenements in Bombay, 81 are one-room tenements. While the minimum space for decent housing requires that no single room tenement should have more than 2.5 persons per room, the average number of persons per room is 4. In fact, over 95 per cent of the City's working population is housed in such tenements with as many as 6 to 9 living in each room. But that is not all. Sometimes one finds as many as 4 families living in the 4 corners of a single room. Similarly, in Karachi almost one-third of the whole working population is crowded at the rate of 6 to 9 persons in a room, whilst in Ahmedabad 73 per cent of the working classes live in one room tenements at the rate of four or more in each room, and this in pre-war days! These figures stand in striking contrast to those of London, where only 6 per cent of the total population lives in one-room tenements, with an average of 1.92 persons per room.<sup>2</sup>

Obviously such overcrowding can never be conducive to family life. And yet, hundreds of thousands of adults of both sexes, and boys and girls, are growing up under these conditions in which no provision can be made for what are ordinarily called the decencies of life. Since both sexes have to share the same room for all purposes, modesty, as that term is understood, is an impossibility for many living under such conditions. All the normal functions of life are witnessed in the daily environment. Birth, disease, co-habitation and

<sup>2</sup> Since the war brought about many dislocations, and changes, the figures used in this article are not recent ones but are prewar statistics, which are really more representative of normal conditions.

death may all take place in the presence of the inmates in the restricted space of the single room. Self-respecting workers, therefore, prefer not to live under such conditions with their families. They leave them in their village homes, and live in the city as single men. This situation makes the city's population masculine in character.

For instance, the number of women per 1,000 males, according to the census of 1931, was only 475 in Calcutta, 553 in Bombay, 697 in Karachi and 698 in Cawnpore. This tendency to leave their families behind owing to unsatisfactory housing conditions is greater in the case of workers who come from distant parts. Out of over 83,000 persons in Bombay from the United Provinces, there were only about 14,000 women. Similarly, out of 21,000 from Madras, there were some 6,000 women, and out of 8,500 from the Punjab, about 1,600 were women. Hence, out of Bombay's population of 1,200,000 in the pre-war years there were approximately 415,000 females.

Similarly, there is an ever-increasing army of single women engaged in factories and other occupations. Unmarried young women, widows and deserted women form a good proportion of women workers. The existence of such non-family groups in industrial cities gives rise to serious problems of personal and social disorganization.

One among such problems is that of living family-less in such a way as to save as much as possible for village dependants. Very often several single men join together and share a room; sometimes one finds as many as 20 men living in a single room. In some cases, night and day shift workers rent a room together. One set keep it warm by day, and the other by night! Hundreds of others, who cannot find

accommodation at low rates, live in the streets and sleep on the pavements, door-steps and verandahs of godowns in the vicinity of the harbour. Often, widows make a living by giving these homeless workers their morning and night meals at low cost.

To reduce the high cost of living, quite a few of the working class families take single men or women as lodgers. But the stranger in the home is often a cause of disruption of marital and family relationships. His or her presence reduces the family's privacy and complicates the problems of daily living. Too often the lodger's presence is a source of moral danger to growing children. Many decent families do not live in chawls where there are too many single men because of the moral risks and lack of privacy involved. This is why many chawls in Bombay, in spite of their cleaner surroundings and better sanitation, were not fully occupied during pre-war years.

The villager's scheme of life has for its frame of reference not the city but the village community which is a small homogeneous and relatively social group. Though isolated, it is really a well-integrated and self-sufficing social organization whose unit is not the individual but the group itself. Hence, the individual is a member of a fixed system from which escape is normally impossible.

The most noteworthy feature of this village society, is the caste and joint family systems which control, mould and define the social behaviour of its various members, and promote their welfare through co-operative effort and projects of mutual aid. The villager's birth, therefore, determines irrevocably the whole course of his social and domestic relations; he must through life eat, drink, marry and give-in-



marriage in accordance with the usages of the social group into which he was born.

Whatever might have been its merits in ancient days, caste system which governs the life of the villager of today is a vast engine of oppression and intolerance. Hence, the village environment is most uncongenial to the development of initiative, individuality and enterprise in those who receive orders and obey them unconditionally. The lower classes in particular are subjected to numerous disabilities; they are shut out from any prospect of social and economic amelioration, and condemned without any hope of release to the fate of helots.

The most tragic aspect of such oppression of the lower classes in the villages is the development of an outlook of despair and dependence, of lack of confidence in their own capacity to lift themselves and control their destiny. Man after all is a creature of habits and to most of the rural inhabitants life consists, in a large measure, of habitual response to the demands of a fixed social system.

The working population of the city is, as has already been pointed out, made up mainly of villagers who are born and bred under such social conditions. As a result, they bring with them into the complex urban environment the habits, attitudes and values which had been called forth by the relatively simple conditions of their village homes. With their rustic patterns of thought, they are forced to struggle with the city's sophisticated ways of doing and behaving.

Thus the problem of adjustment becomes particularly difficult; for, no greater contrast can be imagined than that which exists between the conditions of life and labour in the villages and those in an industrial city. The greater the change, and

the more suddenly it is made, the more difficult is the problem of adjustment, because the village migrants are confronted with the necessity of making a transition from one group of standards to another, from a simple rural culture that is old and fixed to one that is new, more complex and in a state of flux. Deprived of the guidance of the rural social group which dominated their life, they are now obliged to face more or less alone the problems which are peculiar to city life.

The villager in the city has to learn to use new sanitary facilities, new means of transportation, to work in close proximity with people of other castes and to live with others who are likely to be complete strangers. In the country, the intimacy of the primary group played a large part in his whole scheme of life. His conduct was largely governed by the modes of the group in which he found his refuge.

But in the city he finds himself out of place, being different from the city folk. Hence, he becomes more or less detached, knowing many people casually and few intimately. He comes into contact with varied modes and folkways. His old absolute standards of right and wrong are often shaken and challenged. He lives in a hideous overcrowded tenement in a blighted area where anything like a real home life is out of the question. There he soon discovers that all inhibiting neighbourhood sentiments, to which he was accustomed in his village, are absent, and that because of their absence the prostitute, the gambler and others of their ilk find it convenient to establish their resorts in such areas. The bad environment and the lack of suitable housing accommodation soon force him to send his family back to his village, and lead a lonely life in the city.

Further, under the conditions of city life, village community sanctions and pro-

hibitions easily lose their significance; customs applicable to everyone in rural localities seem to apply to a few or to nobody; differences of religion, language, province and economic conditions breed internal conflicts and disrupt cultural habits; the lack of privacy in the crowded tenements destroys the privilege and relaxation of home. Out of such conditions grows an increasingly loose family relationship; the familiar restraints, standards and ideals of sex conduct also break down, and naturally that bundle of emotional attachments, which underlie sound family life and the orderly relationship with neighbours, begins to disintegrate. The ties which gave village life its corporate and organic character are loosened; new ties are not easily formed; and life tends to become individualized.

The health of the worker may also be subjected to a severe strain owing to differences of climate, a defective dietary, excessive congestion, lack of sanitation and the temptations of enforced separation from the family. Further, he lives and works under conditions and circumstances which are new in his experience and completely at variance with anything he has had to face previously. In the village he was used to spasmodic work with long intervals of leisure, and he is now required to work continuously and to order. Disciplined hours of toil are a strain to the body that is unaccustomed to them, and they also involve corresponding strain on the mind which is often under-estimated. The stress and strain of long hours of work, poor food, suppressed or thwarted impulses produce fatigue which is deepened by a sense of loneliness, for nowhere does a single person feel so lonely as in a big city. And the lack of recreation, anonymity of city life and bad companions lead him to seek questionable pleasures.

But that is not all. To overcome depression and the physical discomforts of cheerless conditions of living, the unhappy, maladjusted worker gradually takes to drink. According to the inquiry made into the working class budgets a few years ago by the Labour Office of the Bombay Government, it was found that between 8 to 10 per cent of the income is spent on liquor by those members of the working class families who drink, and that the single man spends more on drink than the man living with his family. Alcohol loosens his social inhibitions and releases the lower impulses of his nature. He, therefore, becomes quarrelsome and heedless of the welfare of his family and of others in the community.

Naturally, the prostitute becomes his sole recreation. Since prostitution is intimately bound up with personal and social disorganisation, there is an alarming growth of this social vice in the industrial city. Then too there is a rapid spread of venereal diseases first in the city and later in the village with the return of the worker to his home. Further, he often forms an irregular union in the city which has a disastrous effect on his family life. Sexual immorality plays a large part in family disharmony. It not only lowers ideals of marriage held by one or the other of the parties, but it often excites jealousy which leads to all kinds of friction, frequently ending in desertion. If we would reduce the fast increasing menace of immorality, vice and crime, we should take steps to protect the non-family groups from personal disorganisation by providing them suitable housing accommodation, with recreational facilities, education and other amenities of life.

The urbanization of the villager results most often in the disintegration of the personal relationships envisaged in the

patterns of behaviour developed over long periods of subjection to an entirely different environment. Moreover, the rural migrant himself tends to become unsettled. He misses the intimate associations and the personal status, however humble, that went with village life. The village culture played a large role in the formation of his habits of thought and life. He was patterned, shaped and moulded by the culture traits of his village. And now all of his habits and aptitudes formed in one environment are subjected to the stress of re-adjustment and re-organization to meet the new situation. In the village society, he played certain well defined roles; under changed social conditions, he must re-orient himself as roles are defined for him by social groups under whose influence he now lives. If he is handicapped physically, mentally or emotionally, this re-definition of the self is more difficult; even in the case of normal or superior persons a serious wrench is experienced when new responses are demanded by changed circumstances. Naturally, therefore, when the traits and complexes already formed are inconsistent with the requirements of city life, they produce strain, tension and conflict. Thus the emigrant villager gets into all sorts of difficulties, becoming finally a problem to himself and a menace to the civic life of the city.

Similarly, young unmarried women, widows and deserted women who work in the city are also exposed to moral dangers. Large numbers of women now work in factories, and their supervision by male jobbers leads to serious abuses. Even where women workers are placed under the supervision of women, known as *naikins*, the greater evils arising from male supervision are not always eliminated. They need greater protection both inside and outside the factory. Such protection can only be

provided if there is proper housing, and enlightened supervision.

But housing projects for non-family groups have not yet received any serious consideration. No doubt, fairly comfortable housing accommodation for non-family groups of the higher working class is available in all big cities. But, unfortunately, the poor non-family groups, are the ones which are allowed to drift owing to the lack of planned accommodation.

No housing projects for non-family groups can be put through on a commercial basis, since they belong to the lowest wage-class. Commercial enterprise will naturally find it economically impossible to provide adequately for them. In the case of women, wages are relatively low. Their small wages make it impossible for them to pay rentals that will bring an adequate return on the investment.

The problem of housing single women workers is further complicated by the recognition of their need for social protection as well as the amenities of life. Such amenities cover decent rooms, wholesome food at reasonable prices, and some provision for cultural and recreational life. This kind of work is being done by the Y.W.C.A. for the better-class women. Why cannot an effort be made by some private or public enterprise to provide such housing facilities for the less fortunate and helpless women?

In planning housing projects for non-family groups, we should see to it that the houses for single women are close to the heart of the city. This arrangement is necessary because of the importance of accessibility to work without loss of time and expense of transportation, and also as a measure of protection to those women who may have to return after dark from work or shopping.

Thus, to stabilize its working population, our industrial cities must effect improvements in the conditions of living and provide a more congenial environment for them. Conditions of living together in great aggregations require new adjustments, quite different from the pattern that had been worked out in the villages. There is a break with traditions and patterns of conduct developed and approved by the village group in response to conditions of life foreign to the city. The city must, therefore, adjust its arrangements so as to protect the newcomers, and aid them in the struggle to adapt themselves to chan-

ged circumstances. Hence comes a challenge to all those interested in the housing of the urban working classes to strive to bring the various traditional objectives of urban housing policy—slum clearance, reducing overcrowding of dwellings, and decrease of rents—under the wider aim of family protection and welfare; it is most important to link housing to family needs and welfare if lasting improvement in family life is to be effected. And further they should also devise methods of training the migrant workers in the art of living in the city and making their re-orientation to city conditions easy and gradual.

# APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY PLANNING

B. H. MEHTA

A regional community, organized on firm foundations, can easily evolve along democratic lines under the initiative and authority of its own leadership. In the following paper, which was submitted to the Asian Relations Conference, Dr. Mehta presents a plan which if worked successfully will enable the community to reach gradually the goal of complete democracy.

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*The social background.*—Asia contains the largest concentration of population in the whole world. These populations belong to many racial stocks, and the long process of social assimilation brought about by economic and social intercourse has woven them into closely knit communities occupying well-defined areas.

It is essential that when we use the word 'community,' and when we suggest that it should become the basis of Asian regeneration, we should define its meaning, as the word, through usage, may have come to bear different interpretations in different countries. In India, especially, the word community has close association with religious groupings.

When we speak of community welfare services, we mean closely knit communities containing a manageable number of families, living in close proximity, in well defined areas. Such communities are bound to have common interests, though they may not be too well defined. These communities may be made up of different social groups with different historical backgrounds and religious beliefs, but having evolved to a settled state of existence, they have a common destiny and must be brought up as democratic units, organised on the basic principles of co-operation and toleration, moving towards a common goal of human happiness and welfare.

Because of the vastness of the physical region and the heavy burden of population, the unity of Asia is only vaguely realised.

Forms of co-operation, especially economic co-operation, are not adequately evolved. Goodwill and understanding exist as a natural subconscious urge, but they have to be cemented by knowledge acquired through closer and more direct association.

Asia's people reached in the past high levels of culture and possessed social organisations which did not lack strength or homogeneity. But they have been considerably weakened by conquest, foreign domination, a long era of feudal stagnation, and a somewhat delayed acceptance of the industrial revolution. These factors have brought about extensive poverty, a low standard of living, devitalised health, high birth rates, and a standard of education that does not enable us to keep pace with world progress.

The weakness and poverty of the individual is further reflected in the society to which he belongs. Social organisation has disintegrated and political development has been retarded by the lack of freedom, and the organisational strength to achieve it.

Western progress has taught us that political emancipation will bring about the desired result. It is through freedom alone that we can develop initiative to put our house in order, to achieve efficiency of organisation, and to restore health and strength to the millions. But the days of political subjection are almost over, and freedom can no longer be delayed. Already the majority of Asian countries possess sufficient freedom to begin the onward

march of progress through industrial development and science. This period of transition may mean bitter conflicts and further social disintegration but these are mere birth pangs which will usher in the New Asian Order.

Whilst it is right that the weapons of progress must be forged on a national and, if possible, on an Asian scale, it is most vital that immediate action should be taken to repair our foundation, to restore health and education, and above all, to create an attitude of co-operation and consciousness of Asian solidarity in the vast masses.

To achieve this end, the most efficient unit of approach is the regional community, be it a village, a section of a town, or a well-defined area in the city. In India we are trying to achieve human well-being through what is known as labour welfare. This may be necessary to repair some of the damage caused by the unplanned and profit-motivated economic development. But to deal with the labour in the factory, is to approach the human group through its most important member in a circumscribed and more or less non-co-operative environment. Moreover, the approach must be through an employer whose interest in human labour is only secondary to his interest in production and profit.

This does not mean, however, that labour welfare programmes are undesirable. They have their place, and are excellently suited to supplement community welfare. But real, far-sighted and extensive measures for human reconstruction should begin through communities organised by the State, by local self-government, and by democratic public initiative.

The aims of a community welfare plan should be to create democratic communities living together according to the four basic principles of co-operation, de-

mocracy, social action and self-help, achieving a high standard of living and happiness, and contributing creatively to the culture of the nation, the continent and humanity at large.

The objectives of community welfare should be (1) to provide a healthy environment and adequate housing; (2) to provide adequate opportunities for the preservation of health and the prevention of disease; (3) to provide proper education including early training, education of the body, emotions and mind, education for work, marriage, recreation and effective social participation; (4) to provide for the education of the handicapped adult; (5) to take measures for the preservation of family health and unity; (6) to achieve an effective organisation of the economic life of the community; (7) to make adequate provision for maternity and child welfare; (8) to provide adequate facilities and opportunities for the recreation of the child and adult; (9) to organise social life in such a way as to promote active participation in local, national and international affairs; (10) to plan methods and programmes for the development of national consciousness and international co-operation; and finally (11) to undertake programmes for the development of local culture in harmony with national and world patterns.

Collectively taken, the aims and objects are to promote the early attainment of world objectives, as laid down in the Atlantic Charter and as expressed by the UNO, in well-defined geographical units inhabited by manageable social groups. It is thus an effective organisational approach towards the achievement of fundamental results. It has been historically proved that when true understanding between nations is absent, any attempt to bring about international co-operation only leads eventually to conflicts and misunderstanding promoted by

selfish minority groups and vested interests. The community plan should help to create a new unity above all social, religious, sectional and local differences; for true unity is possible fundamentally as a geographical concept. If Asian solidarity is, for the time being, our objective, the unit of this Asian solidarity must be found in regional societies within which the aims and objects of the community plan can be realised.

*Town planning.*—Asia has not yet completely emerged out of the feudal age during which the masses depended upon land and lived in intolerable conditions of chronic poverty, want and disease in their insanitary and humble hutments clustered in the rural areas. The seeds of the industrial revolution have been scattered on feudal soils, creating chaotic growths of factories and towns that are littered with slums containing millions of human beings. The social structure created and built in such environments cannot acquire the qualities of health, vitality and beauty.

Since the physical environment is the basis of social structure, the success of community social services can only be assured if town planning precedes the community approach to social life. It is essential that each country in Asia should have its own national housing and town planning act. If such acts are forged after careful deliberation in Asian conferences, organised on the lines of International Housing Conferences held in the past in Paris and other places, a common approach could be made to a most vital problem. In any case, it is essential that measures for town planning should operate in seven fundamental directions. Firstly, slum clearance must be taken in hand in earnest; secondly, areas cleared should be rehabilitated wherever possible; thirdly, a network of quick and cheap communications should

be created for the benefit of the masses; fourthly, congested areas must be opened up by providing 'lungs' in the shape of playgrounds, parks and gardens; fifthly, social amenities for areas containing market-places, shops, post and telegraph services, medical services, fire brigades, police centres, etc., should be properly planned in terms of needs; sixthly, administrative divisions of towns should be well-planned and efficiently organised, and carefully determined civic functions allocated; lastly, entirely new areas should be taken over for the creation of new towns where an ideal physical structure could be created for the occupation of well-organised and disciplined communities, with clearly defined areas for residences, civic amenities, commercial functions, and industrial development.

*The housing problem.*—The housing problem in Asia demands radical solution. Asian concepts of housing are medieval, and no attention is paid to the natural needs of human life, so complex in pattern in the modern industrial age. Houses must be so built that they may become foundations of happy homes. The architecture of the structures, the strength and durability of materials, the quality of workmanship and the provision of at least the minimum of amenities and comforts deserve the consideration of every civilised State.

The one-room tenements in cities and the hutments in rural areas, where human beings and animals are huddled together, are ideal neither for the functioning of human life nor for the organisation of family life nor for the maintenance of health. Community centres can only function after standards of at least minimum housing are laid down. The human habitation, in order of importance, must provide for adequate and well laid out places for a bed room of at least 1,500 cubic feet for every two inhabitants, a kitchen, a dining

room, and a parlour for the family. Adequate and clean water supply, lighting, provision for the disposal of garbage, bathrooms, urinals and lavatories are imperative for each home.

The house is a structure built by the human being for the performance of imperative natural functions like sleeping, cooking, eating, sex life, play, work, rest and social intercourse. The structure must meet the needs of these functions in such a way as to yield maximum satisfaction that can become the basis of human happiness.

The sanitation of the buildings and grounds require organisation and supervision. The buildings require maintenance and care. The community centre of social service should, therefore, provide scientific housing administration. This should be entrusted to specially trained and qualified social workers who would work in co-operation with the health, education and case work officers. Scientific housing management must fulfil the two-fold purpose of (1) education and care of the human beings who must live in obedience to the law of good neighbourliness, and (2) care of housing which must always maintain ideal standards of efficiency and comfort. These two objectives can be achieved through a blending of duties of superintendent, manager and administrator.

Well organised communities, inhabiting well-defined areas, organised with predetermined social objectives, must live, to some extent, under controlled conditions. But this friendly and co-operating authority should exact obedience to minimum rules, maintain close and direct contact with tenants. Further, it should also expect co-operation and participation of members of the community in social amenities and activities that are provided

for the happiness, health, efficiency, and ordered evolution of group life.

Modern housing administration implies the maintenance of vital statistics and other statistical data showing the growth chart of well-being and welfare of the members of the community in every aspect of life.

The foundations of community life are well-laid when carefully planned and erected buildings come into existence in healthy and planned areas, and are under the management and supervision of properly organised housing authorities.

**Health.** It is possible to promote the care of health in the regional community with a thoroughness and efficiency which is not possible in any other manner. Health of millions in Asia is not what it ought to be on account of uncongenial climatic condition, and unhealthy and insalubrious physical environment in the urban and village slums. Further, it is also due to grinding poverty and a low standard of life with consequent chronic malnutrition, and a high birth rate. The conditions of ill-health have been aggravated by centuries of neglect, insufficient medical relief, inadequate trained personnel, and lack of resources.

It is imperative that an Asia-wide drive for physical regeneration should be made by Asian organisations for the promotion of athletics, physical culture, and the playground movements. Health care programmes should be undertaken by maternity and child welfare agencies, schools, and villages. Quick and effective medical aid should be provided and it should reach every family and home.

The community centre provides an ideal field for the organisation of a complete health unit organisation. But it should receive general directions and help from



the Ministry of Health, and be managed by the regional community centre authorities. As health is directly dependent upon sanitary and healthy surroundings and adequate housing, the health unit should work in closest co-operation with the housing authority. The housing authority should look after the care of buildings, grounds and gardens, water supply, sanitary and conservancy organisation under the supervision of the health unit authority.

\* The health unit should be in charge of a medical officer and a staff of nurses and assistants. These should look after a large number of services provided for the promotion of the members of the community. The most important service in the community is the care of the mother and the child provided through the birth control and the maternity and child welfare clinic. The programme of this section of the health unit should include :—

- (1) Birth control and family planning.
- (2) Complete ante-natal care including feeding of the expectant mother for five months before delivery.
- (3) Health visitors' service.
- (4) Post-natal care of the mother for at least one year after the birth of the child.
- (5) Infant and child care including feeding during the first two to five years.

*Family planning.*—Asia, with its teeming population, has to decide about the policies and objectives of birth control in terms of social condition prevailing in different regions. There is an imperative need of a rational and scientific attitude with regard to this matter. Decisions have to be made irrespective of beliefs, customs

and traditions, in the larger interest of people living under modern industrial and social conditions.

Wherever the practice of birth control is found imperative or desirable, it must be accompanied by systematic education about objectives, theories, methods and apparatus. The objectives of social health should never be forgotten, and the community must be saved from an unintelligent practice which may undermine sex and social morale.

*Ante-natal, maternity and post-natal care.*—Methods of ante-natal care are by now too well-known to deserve any special mention. A persistent and careful follow-up of the mother, four months after conception, will not only give her a feeling of security but also ensure the birth of the child under conditions which are congenial to its health and growth.

The main handicap in the way of developing extensive health visitors' services for the benefit of many regional communities is the absence of trained personnel. It is the duty of the State to take effective measures for the creation of special institutions for this purpose. Working under the direction of the medical officer of the community centre, the health visitors should supplement the work of the family case worker, and give advice and practical help to families for the maintenance of health. They should see that the families derive the maximum benefit of the clinical and medical services provided in the community centre. The health visitor is invaluable for supervising the sanitation of homes, prescribing home remedies for minor ailments, and for rendering effective assistance to the mother in carrying out the advice and treatment prescribed by the medical authorities in case of illness.

Post-natal care will help to restore the mother's health and efficiency for normal

duties and work after the hazards of child-bearing. The mother should be given guidance and help regarding not only her health, but also the care and feeding of her child. Even medical aid and nourishment should be provided, if necessary.

*Child welfare.*—The care of the child in its early years by the community, with the help of the State, is the most effective guarantee for the health and efficiency of future citizens. Childhood, the period of dependency, is the longest and the most difficult period of life. Human organism is complex. It is born in a complex environment and needs all the care one can give for its growth and development. But in Asia communities are considerably handicapped to give complete aid to the child in order to enable it to survive. The alarming death rate amongst children in Asian countries is enough justification for laying great stress on the problem of the care of the child.

Pre-schools in Asia must develop on the lines found suitable for Asian conditions. In a friendly and homely atmosphere, the child, together with other children, should receive care and assistance of young and capable women. The pre-school, run according to the principle of activity, should provide play and planned activity, food and rest to the children. The child's early physical and mental growth and its emotional security and development should receive special attention of the pre-school staff. The health unit authorities should look after the child's health and plan its nourishment.

The pre-school, properly housed, well-equipped for play, work and training, manned by young and trained women must guarantee the child's maximum growth and prepare it to receive a properly planned education from the age of five onwards.

The care of the child in the community centre must be complete and generous. But it should be provided on the basis of an Asian children's charter, guaranteeing equal opportunities to all children who must be regarded as assets of the State. The preparation of such a charter is an imperative duty of the Asian Conference.

The community infant and child welfare centre may include a nursery where children may be looked after and fed, unless they are taken to creches in factories, offices and institutions where the mothers work. Care of health, the provision of protection and security, and adequate opportunities for an all round growth are the primary functions of the community centre. In Asia the proper feeding of the child, especially in countries where the standard of life is low, is imperative.

The pre-school of the community centre should function under the joint care of the health unit and the education director. All children in the community should enter the pre-school at the age of two and a half or three.

*Physical welfare.*—The best insurance against disease is the *maintenance of good health*. Carefully planned programmes of physical recreation for children, youths and adults of both sexes are firm foundations for the edifice of a healthy society. A Community centre which provides good housing is not complete without extensive open places converted into playgrounds of various kinds for the physical recreation of the entire community.

Playgrounds do not provide mere physical recreation, for, on the playgrounds the foundations of the social structure are laid. Engaged in physical activities consisting of well organised play, human beings develop emotions, learn co-operation, and receive training for leadership and organised effort.

Playgrounds for children, open grounds for youths, special playgrounds for special games, and the sports arena are organised separately to answer the needs of different age and sex groups in the community. Civilisation demands the existence of a rich game-lore for every nation and community. Asian countries possess a wealth of games that require to be studied and exchanged for the mutual benefit of all countries. The West has developed some unique physical welfare movements and their group games are useful for educational purposes. National games, group games and team games provide opportunities for organised physical recreation for at least one hour a day for every member of the community. The playground has always invited maximum participation according to the personal interest of each individual.

Over and above the playground, the national physical environment should provide opportunities for most healthy physical recreations like swimming, cycling, and mountaineering that add to the zeal for a well-organised outdoor life, especially for the young. As Asia is becoming industrialised and urbanised, the need of outdoor life increases to keep the individual in touch with the health, beauty and orderliness of nature. Community physical welfare programmes must include frequent excursions, recreational and training camps, hiking, and even lone camps for the maintenance of health, and the preparation and training of leadership.

International athletics invite a continuous participation in field of sports. The annual community athletic meet should be a preparation and training for enthusiastic participation in national and international sports. Athletics should prepare the human body for efficient functioning in work-life and healthy parenthood.

Gymnasium attracts some young people, but the playground attracts a larger number. Physical culture planned on sound educational lines should appeal to various sections of the population.

*Education for health.*—The preservation of health requires the education of the individual in matters physical. Educational systems in the East have not given adequate attention for the training of the individual in ordinary matters like diet, rest and care of health. The authorities of the health unit, in co-operation with the director of education should organise programmes for the spread of health knowledge. The cinema, radio, wall newspapers, leaflets, lectures, demonstrations and exhibitions must keep the community health-minded. Ceaseless propaganda and publicity are required in Asian countries where both the birth rate and the death rate are considerably high, pointing to an alarming prevalence of health and disease.

*Health insurance.*—It is but natural that the community, in spite of its good and well looked after housing, its extensive programme for physical recreation, and continuous physical education will require an efficient though not very elaborate medical service. A well-conceived health insurance scheme, subsidised, if necessary, can provide an efficient medical service for the local community. The timely treatment of minor ailments and timely diagnosis of disease have saved many human lives. The masses in Asia are young, ignorant and, therefore, local medical service, organised by the health unit should provide extensive facilities to save not only health, but also expenditure. The health unit authorities should make, with the co-operation of municipal and other health authorities, proper arrangements for hospitalisation and sanatorium treatment.

**Education.**—The regional community is organised for the purpose of education—education for life, for the efficient performance of life's functions. In a highly civilised community the process of education should never end. The countries of Asia are alarmingly backward in education. There are millions who are yet illiterate. In certain countries mere academic or classical education has failed to prepare the individual for the fundamental functions of life, like work and marriage. In the community centre education should (1) prepare the individual for the efficient performance of life's major functions, (2) aid the individual in the day-to-day functions of life, and (3) enable him to understand the complex world mechanism in which he lives, and adjust his life to the larger national and social pattern around him.

The education of child should be the primary function of the regional community. We have already dealt with the pre-school which deals with the child between 3 and 5 years. The process of education begins with the completion of 5 years, when the child enters the primary school. The primary school is the only part of the State educational system which should exist within the regional community. This education should become the foundation of the individual's educational career. The aims of primary education, the principles on which it functions, the methods of teaching and the quality of teachers, and finally the curriculum depend upon the municipal and State education boards and their efficiency.

The primary school should be organised within the regional community, and administered by it with the aid and supervision of the municipality and the State.

On the completion of primary education, the boys and girls of the community

go out to learn in schools and educational institutions in the town or the city. However, the director of education of the community should maintain a permanent contact with the education of each individual in the community. It is the function of the community to inspire, encourage and aid its children to receive education according to their talents and needs.

The community's department of education should pay special attention to the difficulties and handicaps, both mental and physical, of the school population. Countries in Asia have not yet adequately provided for those who are unable to complete their schooling. In the absence of bifurcation courses, the community centre should provide opportunity for vocational training in elementary arts, crafts and clerical services so that those who fail to complete their school education may not be handicapped in life later on.

The education programme of the community falls mainly within the scope of the following : —

- (1) Reading rooms and libraries.
- (2) Education as a part of youth activities including the organisation of study circles, discussion groups, debating unions, art circles, hobby clubs, etc.
- (3) Literacy classes for grown-ups.
- (4) Adult education for men and women through organised adult recreation groups.
- (5) Community education programmes through community newspapers, lectures, cinema, radio, education travels, exhibitions and celebrations.

The reading room and library in the community should become the centre

of intellectual activities. Newspapers should be carefully selected to give information and news that are local, national and international. Books also should be carefully selected to give a high cultural level to the community and satisfy all the different mental tastes that are found in a highly evolved society. The library circle in the community should not only make special plans for stimulating reading, but also encourage those with an aptitude for writing to contribute articles, book reviews, etc., to the community newspapers, wall newspapers and the local press.

Youth activities in a healthy society include a wise blend of physical, mental, creative and cultural pursuits. Young people of today are interested in national and world problems. They demand freedom of thought, and opportunities to express their fresh outlook on life. Study circles may, therefore, be organised on the basis of interest, and discussion groups, debating societies and forums may also be organised for fostering interest and developing knowledge on the basic problems of life.

Youth is interested in art, especially folklore, music, painting, drama and handicraft. A revival of artistic activities in regional communities will raise the cultural level of the whole nation and create a new generation of cultured citizens.

Progress of science in the world today has made it necessary to provide libraries, laboratories and workshops for the benefit of every community group. Western nations have stolen a march over Asian countries through the application of science for the conquest of nature. However, some countries in Asia have already made stupendous progress in the world of science and industry. We must democratise science and provide opportunities for technical and scientific experiments on a vast scale

to the rank and file of the people. This can be done easily through the organisation of hobby clubs and workshops for the benefit of both sexes.

Asia ought to determine and solve the problem of illiteracy, wherever it exists, within the next ten years. Vast masses of people yet exist, even in large cities and towns, who are unable to read and write. The 'each-one-teach-one' campaign can achieve unique results, as actual experiments have shown, because literacy groups can be organised by the student population in each country aided by the community centre authorities and the national adult education institute.

A more ambitious programme of adult education can be carried out through well-organised community women's clubs and men's recreation clubs. These clubs should function during leisure hours.

The women's clubs should provide opportunity for recreation and education in fundamental subjects of interest to women like mother-craft, domestic economy, home-crafts, etc., organised programmes for training in birth-control, child care, cooking, tailoring, etc. Fancy work of all kinds not only provides recreation and education but also helps to supplement the income of families and stimulate a healthy social life for women. Likewise, the working man's recreation clubs can organise programmes of outdoor and indoor games, excursions and educational visits and further help to organise co-operative efforts of various kinds. Activities to aid the economic life of the community may be organised through the initiative of clubs for men and women.

Modern media of publicity and propaganda should be utilised for the purpose of raising up quickly the intellectual level of well-organised community groups.

Amongst these the 16 mm. film, and radio must play the most effective part. Weekly programmes of educational films will provide knowledge with amusement, and blend recreation with education. The radio should bring to the community, through the air, information and knowledge from all over the world, whilst the various stations in each country should give special programmes for the benefit of community centres.

Each well-organised community group should own its own printing press and publish its own community newspaper. A good deal of further educational propaganda must be done through specially prepared pamphlets and leaflets.

An intensive programme may also include specially organised lecture series, visits to places of historical, economic and cultural interest, and organised celebrations of community and national holidays. An active social life must thus be made the basis of community happiness and cultural development.

*Economic life.* --Economic life in the community is related to the work life of men and women in fields and factories. The regional may live outside the areas of work, and attend work places taking advantage of public conveyances; or they may live near the place of work and walk to the place of employment; but where workshops exist together within the residential area, it is possible to organise regional industrial communities. This can be done only if no factory or industry proves an obstacle to the welfare of the community.

Social services to aid the economic life of a community should have the following objectives:--

- (1) To enable the community to take advantage of its maximum available earning capacity.

- (2) To create maximum earnings through right employment, treatment of unemployment, and organising activities to supplement existing incomes.
- (3) To reduce family expenditure.
- (4) To devise ways to adjust expenditure to income, and to meet any possible shortage which may lower the minimum standard of living.

The problem of economic poverty is extensive in many countries of Asia. Whilst national measures should be taken to bring science to the aid of production, the small community must devise its own ways to maintain the firmness of the foundations of economic life without which the real prosperity of the human group, and the maintenance of a reasonable standard of life become impossible.

The regional community should aim at "full employment." This will mean the employment of men and women after their completion of the preparation for work life through education and training. The community should maintain a statistical and historical record of the work life of its members. Further, it should organise:--

- (1) Vocational guidance service to enable young men and women to select proper vocations according to their talents and abilities.
- (2) Vocational training groups in arts, crafts and business services.
- (3) Community employment service to find work for the able-bodied persons who are unemployed.

Vocational guidance includes elementary instructions to young people about the nature of work life that prevails in the

social environment to which the individual belongs. They are informed about the available fields of employment, the preparation necessary for each one of them, and the likely rewards and prospects in the various vocations. Further, through a series of intelligence and performance tests, specific work tests and temperament tests, the natural inclinations, aptitudes and talents of the individual are determined, and guidance is given regarding the suitability of vocations for each individual. The duty of providing vocational guidance should be performed by the director of education of the community only in case this is not done through proper vocational guidance bureau organised departmentally or in the high schools.

Vocational training of an elementary kind, sufficient to provide small income to the unemployed or to handicapped individuals, or to supplement the income of families should be given through organised vocational groups functioning under qualified instructors. The vocations should be selected to utilise raw materials easily available in the country, to supply the needs of the community and the local market, and to produce such articles that will utilise any special talent that exists in the community.

A well organised employment bureau is an asset in a regional community. It may function independently, or it may work in co-operation with larger employment exchanges. Through the employment bureau the community should make the maximum effort to find employment and to keep unemployment at its lowest level. The work of the bureau must include registration of the unemployed, contacting sources providing employment, studying employment trends, contacting would-be employers on behalf of the unemployed, systematic canvassing of jobs, and follow-up

work of cases where the newly employed person has to be adjusted to his new work environment.

To overcome tragic consequences of poverty of millions of people all over Asia, it is imperative that organised regional groups should be given every encouragement and aid to become economically independent. Three main types of economic activities suggest themselves for improving the earning capacity of families :—

- (1) The organisation of home industries and industrial co-operatives with a view to retain the dignity of labour and the freedom of the producer.
- (2) The creation of handicrafts, industrial homes and work-houses in the community centre.
- (3) The provision of work to women and subsidiary earners to supplement the income of the family.

Germany and Japan, and many small countries of Europe have shown the value and progress of small scale industries, worked by electric power, for manufacturing whole articles, or parts of articles for which there is a local demand. A large number of articles can be manufactured in small workshops using small power-driven machinery. But there are many lines of manufacture which do not require even a power-drive.

Home industries require planned organisation and co-operative effort, so that labour within an entire family can be employed for the manufacture of specific parts which can be collected centrally in workshops for the purpose of assembling, finishing, packing and marketing.

Handicrafts in Asia have reached a high level of quality production in the course of centuries. Mahātma Gandhi

has made the spinning wheel the pivot of economic recovery. There are a large number of other handicrafts which are suitable for village and town life to create self-sufficiency for local communities. In cases of acute poverty, it is possible for the State, municipal authorities, public charity, or even local community initiative to organise small workhouses to find and provide work, especially to the handicapped sections of a community: Such workhouses are needed for women who cannot work the whole day, for the partially disabled and the mentally deficient, and for the aged who have enough vitality left to work according to their interest and ability.

In all cases where it is not possible to create special institutions for providing work, light work which can bring in a small income, can be found for families. This may include part-time work for women and partially employed persons. Work may be secured even for the student population to earn their way to higher education. But this particular type of work will only be suitable for ill-organised and backward communities.

It is not enough that organised communities should take measures to find employment and increase the income of families. It is equally important to spread the knowledge of domestic science even to the lowest economic group so that by education and proper cultivation of habits, they may learn to maintain a decent standard of life within their income. The proper distribution of family income in chawls contribute most to family welfare. The prevention of wasteful expenditure and indebtedness, and the cultivation of thrift and saving habits are necessary in order to maintain the economic equilibrium of families.

The two main measures for the achievement of this object are: (1) education and

(2) co-operative consumers and credit societies.

Education of groups of adults, men and women, in the art and science of living is necessary to make family life intelligent and creative. This should especially refer to food, clothing and the expenditure relating to the daily routine of life. In Eastern countries the uneconomic expenditure over marriages, births, deaths, religious practices, etc., require a determined and effective handling so that new and more rational traditions which will not upset the economic foundations of family life, may be created. The next fundamental practice that requires consideration is that of 'booming' which creates most serious problem to private and indigenous banking to the greatest detriment of working classes. The problem can only be solved by eradicating the causes of indebtedness, eliminating the booming habit, and removing the unorganised class of money-lenders.

Thus co-operative consumers' societies, and co-operative credit societies need to be organised for the benefit of every regional community, functioning with the aid of a democratic State and operating under its supervision and control.

*Social authority and social organisation.*—A regional community, organised on firm economic foundations, can easily evolve along democratic lines under the initiative and authority of its own leadership and organisation. It may not be possible to achieve this goal in the initial stage, as the plan has to develop under State and municipal auspices and finance, and be carried out under a trained executive consisting of the housing superintendent, the medical officer, the director of physical welfare, the director of education, etc. But if the plan is worked successfully for a number of years and if special encouragement is given to local initiative, talent and organisation, the



community will be able to reach gradually the goal of complete democracy.

It is presumed that large scale application of the plan of regional communal development may not be feasible immediately because of the lack of resources and trained leadership; but it will prove useful to organise experimental social groups in

carefully selected and developed areas. These experiments will, no doubt, reveal difficulties and handicaps, but they will, at the same time, indicate the lines on which secure foundation can be laid not only for the new era in Asian renaissance but also for the steady and prosperous growth of large human communities.

# THE PROBLEM OF DEPENDENT AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN

KOKILA DORAISWAMY

In no country are children so much neglected in spite of all the love and affection bestowed on them as in India. Little attention is paid in average Indian homes to the legitimate requirements of the child. In the following paper, which was submitted to the All India Conference of Social Work (1947), Miss Doraiswamy outlines the causes that lead to neglect and dependency and suggests measures for safeguarding the fundamental rights of children.

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One of the most important subjects for our consideration in this Conference is the welfare of our children. In no other country are children so much neglected in spite of all love and affection bestowed on them as in India. No attention is paid in an average Indian home even to the legitimate requirements of the child. To solve the problem of neglected and dependent children, it is left to the State to solve the major social problems or else it will not be possible to rehabilitate these unfortunate ones.

The causes for the growth and prevalence of neglected and dependent children can be best appreciated by examining the responsibilities of the society broadly under three heads: Home, State and Individuals. The real cause that leads to the neglect of children, especially in India, is poverty. Besides poverty there are other reasons which contribute to the negligence of children. They are :—

1. Improper and inadequate parental care due to indifference, ignorance and illiteracy of the parents, drive many children from their home into the hands of undesirable persons.

2. Frequency of birth and the age of the mother (too young and too old) lead to the neglect of children.

3. Where the family is enlarged by the frequent birth of children, the mother is forced to work in factories to add to the income of the family. This

results in the ill-health of the mother and she becomes helpless to look after the children properly. At the same time, the parents have no facilities to admit children into proper boarding houses.

4. The miscomprehension of the theory of *karma* and fate is the chief cause for producing an unlimited number of children.

5. The widowed mothers find it impossible to manage their homes without outside help. Since the widow does not get remarried, she falls back upon children for maintaining the family. Thus, many children in their young age are sent to factories, as a result of which they are bereft of normal growth, education and proper outlook on life.

6. Wherein the husband deserts the wife, she is unable to manage the family and bestow adequate care upon the upbringing of children. Desertion as an easy road to relief from domestic discord is an all-too-common procedure. Such anti-social behaviour reveals either moral weakness or a lack of appreciation of the meaning of marriage and indifference to its obligations. Much could be done and must be done through the instruction of the young as to the purposes, obligations and possibilities of marriage and family life.

7. Where the husband and the wife are quarrelling partners, the result is disharmony in the family. Children brought

up under such an environment develop a sense of irresponsibility and negligence.

8. Drinking habits and sex-irregularity of the parents create unpleasant atmosphere in the home. Though these may not at all times lead to broken homes, yet, the household duties are liable to be neglected by the parents.

9. After the demise of the first wife, the man usually re-marries. The step-mother steps in and the proverbial maltreatment and negligence of the motherless children follow suit. The ill-treatment of children by the step-father is common among the poor. Such children become aggressive and incorrigible due to some emotional disturbance and inferiority complex. The father and the mother also neglect them being powerless and helpless in not knowing how to solve family problems.

10. Social ostracism in India is so much prevalent that illegitimate children are left uncared for by their own mothers.

11. Many tenants living in the same house produce bad effects on children in that they are soon given to looseness and freedom. Parents then find it physically impossible to teach them good habits. Consequently, they are prone to neglect children.

12. So long as the art of begging is not eradicated but allowed to exist as a profession in cities, towns, villages, temples, trains, tram termini, bus-stands, etc., that, backed up by pauperism, will contribute to problems of the neglected and dependent child. The people of India must give up the practice of giving indiscriminate charity to beggars so that children may be prevented from begging.

13. Where the father and the mother are not cognizant or do not understand

their duties and responsibilities towards children, they stand in great danger of being neglected. Children are brought up in old-fashioned ways because the correct methods of upbringing them are not known to the ignorant and illiterate parents.

14. Both the parents are sometimes taken away from the home to eke out their livelihood and thus children at home are left without proper care and attention; besides, an artificial atmosphere exists in such homes where normal discipline of the family fails to exist. This makes children lead a wayward and irresponsible life.

15. Finally, the lack of benevolent and humanitarian principles among wealthy citizens, failure to realise the needs of neglected and dependent children and want of willingness to help them are some of the causes and hurdles that exist and retard the immediate care of the neglected and dependent child. In general, such children usually live in a house of ill-fame or in a defective, broken or poor home.

Added to these, the economic conditions of the country, the undesirable social environment, the low moral and intellectual standard among the poor, the lack of proper medical help, the insanitary living conditions in cities and villages, the need for proper accommodation, the overcrowding in cities and towns, the lack of park spaces and play-grounds, and the want of proper education are all major causes that indirectly promote negligence and dependency.

Neglected children generally become dependent and also delinquent. The State, therefore, must prevent these unfortunate children from falling into crime and vagrancy by adopting preventive and curative methods, the preventive method being more economic and promising than the curative.

The State and private agencies must organise activities that will instruct parents and help them to discharge their duties towards their children adequately. Family solidarity is very helpful to develop the right type of personality in children.

The above causes leading to neglect and dependency can be removed only by improving home conditions. To have a good home the women at home must be tackled. Mothers must be offered facilities to gather information regarding food values and nutrition. They should also be instructed in the upbringing of children. Training in motherhood is essential to grown up girls. Health centres should be provided where women should be offered lessons in health and also in home treatment of simple ailments. Living conditions of the people should be vastly improved. Minimum living wages should be assured to the industrial and agricultural labourers. Women should be encouraged to spend their evenings at recreational centres in conversation, in games and in reading vernacular literature on topics pertaining to the care of children. Needle work classes should be conducted to facilitate the mothers to learn to make garments for children and for themselves. Adult education classes should be conducted for the benefit of these mothers and they must also be given instruction as to how to spend their earnings economically to meet all the requirements of the home.

Establishment of pre-natal clinics and maternity homes, not only in cities but more essentially in villages, to safeguard the health of mothers is an important factor. Publication of literature in vernacular on health topics and distribution to literate and expectant mothers will teach them the right method of looking after their health during and after pregnancy.

A certain amount of post-natal instruction on the care of the baby is also a valid necessity.

People do not wish to live in dirty and unhealthy localities. Therefore, the improvement of housing conditions is an imperative need. The State should see that expectant mothers who are employed should be given long leave to recoup their health. Health insurance systems should be introduced which will enable the poor to get the necessary medical aid. Poverty, which is a more serious problem, should be eliminated by using the manpower of the country for constructive work, to increase the nation's wealth and to utilise natural resources. Our industries must be reorganised for the benefit of the working class by amending the labour legislation. Since agitation for the improvement of wages is already there, the State should now see that reasonable wages are offered to workers to enable them to live better. Adequate educational facilities should be offered to poor children. Working conditions in factories must be improved to prevent accidents and occupational diseases. Birth-control must be advocated to limit the size of the family; thereby the living conditions of the family will be considerably improved.

To tackle the problem of neglected children, activities should be directed, as mentioned before, to improve home conditions for home is an aspect of State in miniature. It is an ideal democracy. The purpose of the home may be said to be the training of the young for citizenship in the larger social group - the State. It is this thought that Forbush seems to have in mind when he says: "Even in the best conducted orphanages an enormous proportion of the babies under one year old die and for no other reason than that there seems to be no substitute for the assiduous

attention, nestling and cradling of a baby by its mother. Institutions produce types, while homes give persons. Not only is the home a purpose and a spirit, it is also a fellowship. Assignments of regular task not only develop a sense of duty and responsibility but also of sharing a common enterprise."

The unity and continuity of the home must be consistent for proper upbringing. The helplessness and needs of infancy made necessary the home and family life. "The family" says Professor Peabody, "is an ethical as well as an economic fact. It is the object of the sweetest sacrifice and the happiest self-forgetfulness. The family is the premier in the moral education of the race. Here the child learns his first lessons in love—the bond of perfectness, gentleness, kindness, respect for persons, fairness, loyalty and duty." When we consider the plasticity of infancy and childhood, we can understand to a certain extent the unlimited possibilities of home where love, sympathy, cheer, goodwill, kindness, helpfulness, straightforwardness and the other virtues and their opposites rule. The urgency of the problem has already been suggested by Mrs. Slattery. "What shall keep our children steady? They are six weeks old—they have no ideals. They are six years old—there is hope. They are sixteen—our outlook is pretty nearly done. They are twenty—whether we will or no, our fundamental work is finished. We have given the set to the life we have transmitted."

*Activities for the neglected and dependent children living in their own homes but who are in need of outside social effort for their welfare.*—It is easy to do more complete and constructive work with children because they are more plastic and susceptible to change. Nursery

schools should be established in villages, towns and cities because they are necessary to provide relief to the working and widowed mothers, whom poverty forces to work the whole day. Management of nursery schools should not be entirely left in the hands of the charitable. They must be maintained by the State as an integral part of the educational system. The enforcement of compulsory elementary education as in advanced countries and the rendering of medical aid to the sick and ailing children would go a long way in helping to eradicate the problem.

Proper protection should be given to young girls against sex irregularity and immoral association. The child should be protected against physical brutality sometimes from its parents, guardians or employers. The State should protect them from exhaustive and degrading labour in our big cities by amending the child labour legislation. The establishment of child welfare and health centres in cities and villages and in industrial concerns will be one of the foremost necessities to protect the health of children. The State should force the industrialist to have creches attached to big factories in order to help working mothers in the care of their babies during working hours.

The problem of the neglected and dependent child in this country touches each and every citizen. It is, therefore, up to us to educate public opinion and induce the State to rehabilitate them. The State should also force the parents to support their children. It should, as far as possible, control parents who neglect their children and thus promote family welfare.

The casual factors of dependency and neglect are not to be found in children themselves but in the family due to the

various causes already mentioned. To rehabilitate the family, the State should give financial aid to needy mothers in addition to the methods already suggested. The State should help the family if the husband is incapable of earning due to physical and mental disabilities or when the husband is in a penal institution. Should the mothers be widows or become deserted wives, the State should help them financially because they help the State in caring for its future citizens. Besides, such an arrangement will give children a good home and a normal upbringing.

Before financial aid is given to the needy home, a survey must be made of the needs of each home. The mother should be compelled to live with her children and care for them when she receives the State help. The mother who receives such financial aid from the State must be mentally and morally fit to take proper care of her children. She must be forced to send them regularly to school and care for them according to the standard set. To investigate and supervise the above facts, the family case-work method must be employed with the help of trained social workers.

It is a known fact that the child placing system is superior to institutional care. Foster homes, adoption homes and receiving homes are in many ways better than institutions. But such homes must be properly investigated, with regard to their (1) economic, and educational standards, and (2) moral and religious fervour, before children are entrusted to their care. The reasons for wanting to adopt and receive children should be ascertained properly. The health of the home must be looked into before children are actually sent there. These homes should be periodically supervised by trained workers appointed by the child placing agency.

The child placing movement is not a present common in our country.

Cottage system or, cottage plan should be introduced in institutions, wherever possible, since the constructive forces which help the development of the child are at their maxima in such a plan. It may be more expensive, but in the long run it is beneficial because this system produces better youngsters. Proper records of the progress of the child should be maintained in these institutions. Special attention should be paid to the educational, physical and recreational aspects. The State should give sufficient financial aid to institutions which undertake to look after children.

*Training in institutions.*—The house mother, who has an aptitude for such work and who has received some training should be put in charge of each cottage to develop parent-child relationships. Regular education and vocational training suited to the abilities of children should be given. Physical instructors should be appointed to teach children to play constructively.

New sets of habits should be developed in children so that they could adjust themselves within society satisfactorily on their leaving the institution. The staff must help children in developing a new philosophy of life. Training in citizenship should be given to them. They should also be trained to feel their individual responsibility. Institutions should also teach them the value of money, of applied efforts and the wisdom of developing economic independence. Cultural values and national prestige should be impressed on the minds of growing children.

Domestic duties must be undertaken by children during their stay in institutions. Sufficient freedom should be given for them to enjoy outside recreation. Children

should be divided into a number of units and be placed under the control of proper personnel so that they may receive individual attention. The system of wearing uniform dress, marching and doing routine duties should be given up so that no differentiation may be marked out between the children of the institution and normal children who live in their own homes. A psychologist and a psychoanalyst should be appointed to visit these institutions periodically to treat those

children who suffer from behaviour problems.

The State should supervise institutions which undertake to educate and look after the neglected and dependent child. The financial help given by the State to private institutions gives it the necessary rights of supervision. To carry out this function effectively, the State should organise a special department of public welfare.

# EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION OF THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

S. C. Roy

In the following paper, which was submitted to the All India Conference of Social Work (1947), Prof. Roy discusses the problems which are more or less common to the principal groups of the physically handicapped. The much needed improvements in the existing educational provisions for the physically disabled children should receive as much consideration as the needs and problems of the newly handicapped adults. Prof. Roy stresses the essential need of scientific and comprehensive study which will bring to light the problems and situations we do not yet understand.

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The term "physically handicapped" includes those persons, who, because of certain physical disabilities arising from disease, accident or congenital reasons, fail to attain to the normal social and economic status either temporarily or permanently. It is important to note that the social workers should be more interested in the effects of a physical handicap rather than in the handicap itself. The reason is obvious. Different people react differently to the same handicapping condition, and it is this reaction, rather than its causative agent, which constitutes a challenge to the educators and the social workers.

The physically handicapped have been grouped under various categories from different standpoints. One of these classifications is as follows :—

1. Those whose handicap involves one or more physical senses, e.g., the blind, the deaf, the blind-deaf, etc.
2. Those whose handicap gives rise to motor disability or limitation, e.g., the crippled, cardiacs, malnutrites, and so on.
3. Those with various types of defective speech, arising from neurological or psychogenic conditions.

Another classification of the physically handicapped, which is more amenable

to easy comprehension and practical handling, is as follows :—

1. The visually handicapped or the blind, the partially-blind, and the partially-sighted.
2. The acoustically handicapped or the hypacusic, including the deaf and the hard-of-hearing.
3. Those suffering from the combination of both visual and auditory deficiencies, i.e., the blind-deaf or the blind-deaf-mute.
4. Those disabled in speech.
5. The crippled or the orthopedic cases.
6. Those of lowered vitality, viz., the malnutrites, the cardiacs, and the tuberculous.
7. The epileptic.

The leprosy cases, most probably because of their insignificant number in the Western countries, are not usually included in the literature on the physically handicapped. In India, however, their inclusion in the physically handicapped area is advisable in as much as they constitute approximately one-fifth of the world's leper population.

No provision has yet been made in this country either for education or rehabilitation for several of the aforesaid types of the physically handicapped. The present



Conference should be able to arouse active interests in the sponsoring of these new ventures in India. The *modus operandi* may be borrowed from the experiences of the advanced countries of Europe and America, but they must be modified to suit the Indian conditions and requirements. The need for such adaptations is of vital importance as our failures and disappointments in many an endeavour may, in quite a few instances, be directly traced to our uncritical acceptance of the Western practices and models.

The importance of the medical and hygienic aspects of work with the physically handicapped is so pronounced that it is necessary to have a few general physicians as well as specialists associated with the Conference for the purpose of assisting in these matters with ready suggestions and opinions. In view of the prevailing backwardness of the service for the handicapped in India, the need of a number of experienced medical men to help the Conference in an advisory capacity is indispensable.

In the present paper, it is proposed to set forth only those points which are more or less common to all the handicapped areas indicated above. This procedure has been deemed desirable as the paper will, otherwise, be too long and unwieldy for efficient handling. There are, undoubtedly, countless problems which belong only to individual fields and do not admit of a horizontal application to all the handicapped groups. The particular areas and their peculiar features should be fully examined on the Conference floor, while this paper should deal with only those topics which are common to all the handicapped fields.

From the historical perspective, four distinct stages of social attitude towards the physically handicapped may be considered here as briefly as possible.

1. *Exposure and destruction.*—In the pre-historic days, the elimination of the handicapped was achieved by Nature herself through the operation of the principle of survival of the fittest. This holds good among the animals even today. The human beings also helped Nature in this work of destruction of their physically disabled fellow-beings on various grounds, e.g., military incapacity, inability to defend themselves adequately from human foes and wild beasts, incapacity to secure food by hunting, inability to move quickly with the constantly roving tribes and so on. Strangely enough, this totalitarian slaughter was carried on with the full approval of community and proper legislative sanction; and even advanced thinkers like Plato and Aristotle lent their theoretical support to these gruesome practices. Plato's Ideal State was closed to all the physically infirm individuals.

It is very gratifying to note that the inhuman practice of exposing physically handicapped children and annihilating similarly afflicted adults was never in vogue in India. Many ancient Indian records, composed several centuries before the Christian Era, show that the physically handicapped persons were treated with extreme kindness and sympathy by the kings and the people at large. Only those from among the countless instances may be set forth here in support of this point of view :

In the *Laws of Apastamba* it was stated that the "Blind, deaf, dumb and diseased persons, as long as their infirmities last," should be free from taxation.

The command in the *Laws of Baudharyana*, was that "Granting food, clothes and shelter, they (the kings) shall support those who are incapable of transacting legal business, namely, the blind, idiots, those immersed in vice, the incurably diseased, and so forth."

In the *Sabhaparba* of the great epic, *The Mahabharata*, the illustrious sage, Niradī, asked Yudhishthira: "Do you treat as father, your subjects who are afflicted with blindness, dumbness, limeness, deformities, friendlessness and those who have renounced the world?"

2 *Care and protection* In other countries also, in course of time, social consciousness developed and respect for human personality grew. The progressive sections of the people revolted against the atrocities committed on the physically handicapped children and adults. As a result, these outrageous practices were gradually abandoned, and care and some sort of occupational training were substituted in the place of total annihilation.

The advent of Christianity emphasized the need of protecting all types of physically handicapped persons. One of the most unequivocal teachings of Christ is that one should have compassion towards the poor towards the deprived in every sense of the term, and at least the early Christians endeavoured to actualize this behest of their Master. The Christian community in general and the church officials in particular had their doors always open for all kinds of handicapped people. St. Jerome urged that "One should be eyes to the blind, arms to the weak, and feet to the lame." Many hospital brotherhoods were set up, where the physically handicapped individuals were sheltered, fed and clothed. The most famous of these hospital brotherhoods was founded by St. Basil in 369 A.D. at Caesaria-in-Cappadocea.

With the decline of the power and influence of the church towards the end of the Middle Ages, the care and protection of the poor and the infirm were transferred to a large measure to State and city authorities. In England, for instance, specific acts were passed as early as 1573 and 1601,

authorizing the imposition of a rate for the purpose of supporting those who were incapacitated for work. The Act of 1601 enjoined upon the Justices of Peace to extend economic relief to those indigent people who were old, sick, blind and crippled.

Some attempts were also made in the ancient and the medieval times to cure the various physical handicaps. But the methods of treatment were quite primitive and they most often included magic baths, temple-sleep, exorcism, etc. Those afflicted with blindness, deafness or some other physical abnormality were usually regarded as possessed by demons, and the medical treatment was directed towards driving out these evil spirits.

3 *Training and education.* - Mere care and protection are, however, not enough to make the physically handicapped persons socially useful. No attempt was made to train and educate them in the ancient or medieval times, and this accounts for the fact that the modern period of history opens with the picture of the physically handicapped, some of whom were well cared for, but very few possessed any manual or mental skill.

The eighteenth century was, however, a period of great intellectual awakening, humanitarian urges and social reforms. Liberty, equality and fraternity were already in the air, and this revolutionary impulse could not but affect the conditions of the physically handicapped to a considerable extent. Some of the eminent thinkers and educators turned their attention to those people and pleaded for a universal system of education for them. This led to the gradual establishment of schools for the deaf, the blind, and later, for other types of physically handicapped children. It must be admitted, however, that the education imparted to them

remained, for a long time to come, mainly religious in content, the whole purpose of this education being to make them Godfearing, to have them occupied with something, and, thus, to keep them out of mischief. Hardly any effort was made to gear their education to social needs and their economic rescue was not clearly visualized or believed to be generally possible.

4. *Social absorption*.—This stage of the evolution of social attitude towards the physically handicapped is still in its initial process of development. The ideal is to consider the physically handicapped as the integral members of the social organism and to extend to them the fullest possible opportunities, for education and employment, and, thus, to help them to achieve normal social and economic status.

The attainment of this laudable objective presupposes the satisfactory solution of almost an infinite variety of problems inherent in work on behalf of the physically handicapped. Only a few of them are very briefly noticed in the subsequent paragraphs:—

1. *General problems*.—The chief topics here relate to accurate definitions, case discovery and census, and useful classifications.

Although systematic work with some groups of the physically handicapped commenced in some European countries about two centuries ago, it is strange to find that a good deal of vagueness in the use of the terms describing different physical disabilities has persisted even up to this day. It is obvious that no type of servicing—social, educational, medical, etc.—can be undertaken on a scientific basis on behalf of the handicapped people unless the total number and the varied types of the clientele to be served are adequately known; and this knowledge is dependent on an absolute

understanding of the exact denotation and the connotation of the terms employed to indicate the various physical handicaps.

The definitions of these terms are mainly of three types—legal, medical, and educational. The legal definition seeks to determine the judicial recognition of the nature of handicap; the medical definition discovers the degree and the extent of a handicap; while, the educational definition examines the educability of a handicapped person.

It is to be noted that all the physical handicaps which have been enumerated in the foregoing portion of this paper, have not been recognised and defined in India. Besides, we have only medical definitions, though not standardised, of only those handicaps which have been accepted as such—the legal and the educational definitions being completely absent. It is urgent that all these physical incapacities should be taken into account and they should be defined with as much accuracy as possible from all useful standpoints, i.e., in terms of the purposes they are intended to serve.

The physically handicapped, though they run into millions in actual numbers, constitute a small minority in the total population of a country. In every large community, it has always been a very hard task to locate the physically handicapped individuals and record their reliable statistics. Difficulties are many and varied; but they must be overcome if all the physically handicapped people are to be redeemed from the state of utter ignominy and wretchedness, and are to be allowed to take their legitimate places by the side of their physically normal brothers and sisters.

The need of formulating suitable definitions of the different physical handicaps is of paramount importance in as

much as the census enumerators cannot be expected to make a success of their job with vague definitions. Particularly when borderline cases are involved, terminological exactitude is indispensable. This is, however, not the only difficulty in case discovery. In several instances, the parents refuse to reveal the existence of physically handicapped cases in the family. This refusal springs from many factors, e.g., the idea that a physical handicap is a social disgrace as it represents retributive justice of the Providence for some past sin, the attempt to screen the disabled children from the curious and the unsympathetic world, and so on.

Several remedial measures may be suggested, e.g., a well-planned educational programme for the parents on the facts and figures about the physically handicapped should be organized; the census of the handicapped should be recorded annually; legislations requiring the notification of the handicapped cases by the parents, the physicians, and the social workers ought to be promulgated; the achievements of the handicapped people and work on behalf of these individuals should be brought to the notice of the public as often as possible, and so on.

It may be mentioned *en passant* that the decennial census reports in India record only three types of the physically handicapped, viz., the blind, the deaf, and the lepers.

After the preparation of a complete and a reliable census, the physically handicapped persons should be classified under various heads so that the exact nature of services required in each case may be accurately determined. Classifications, like definitions, ought to be arranged in conformity with the purposes they are designed to serve. •

2. *Medical problems.*—Coming to the question of actual servicing, it seems that, for a sizable number of physically afflicted persons, the need for medical service precedes that for any other type of service. Some even go as far as to subscribe to the view that the problems of the handicapped are mainly medical in character. The need of more or less constant medical service for the cardiacs, the tuberculous, and the orthopedics is apparent. The main reason for the inferior health condition of the physically handicapped is that the underlying diseases or the accidents which are responsible for a physical disability, leave behind them, in several instances, additional devastating effects on the body and the mind of the victims.

Some of these problems have been realised by the educators of the handicapped in advanced countries and measures have been adopted to tackle them effectively. Provisions have been made in schools and agencies for periodic inspections of general health as well as of the particular disabilities of the handicapped. It is obvious that these people, in order to be capable of undertaking any type of endeavour, must be helped to rid themselves of the contributory effects of the diseases or the accidents responsible for their physical disability.

Since the physically handicapped, by and large, are more likely to suffer from bad health than the physically normal, attempts should be made to protect and preserve their health in all possible ways. Work on their behalf ought to involve the fullest co-operation between the physicians, on the one hand, and the educators or the social workers, on the other. The institutions for them should have on their staffs, besides the physicians, some experts in occupational, educational, and recreational therapy. There should also be

adequate provisions for suitable physical education. In addition to formal calisthenics, arrangements should be made to provide outdoor games and exercises.

3. *Educational problems.*—It should be understood very clearly that the education of the physically handicapped children is neither a charity nor a rare privilege. The physically handicapped children have as much right to educational opportunities as those without any handicap. If the basic principle that the education of normal children is a responsibility of the State, be sound, there is no reason why the same principle should not be applicable to the physically disabled children. As a matter of fact, the invidious distinction between the handicapped and the non-handicapped, so far as education is concerned, has been eliminated in the advanced Western countries. Both in Great Britain and the United States, for instance, the compulsory laws for school attendance apply both to the handicapped and the non-handicapped children, and both these groups are equally entitled to at least elementary education free of charge.

Every institution for the physically handicapped, whether it is meant for children or for adults, should, in addition to the objectives aimed at by similar institutions for the normal, stress two ulterior ends: economic independence of the handicapped, and their social and psychological adjustment. These two are very often, though not always, dependent on each other, but each is to be achieved by separate methods and techniques.

As in the case of the physically normal, all levels of education should be provided for the handicapped, such as, nursery and kindergarten education, school education, and higher or post-school training. There is a myriad of problems connected with the education of these people, which

should be seriously considered by the social workers, educators, and the community at large. Some of these problems are: the training of teachers and workers in the specialized provision of special curricula to suit the peculiar conditions of each handicap; arrangements for education in homes and hospitals for those who are incapacitated from attending a school, and so on.

In India, some educational facilities have been provided only for the blind and the deaf, and no such provision has yet been made for the other groups of the physically handicapped. It is needless to mention that this neglect and indifference should be removed forthwith.

4. *Economic problems.*—The economic success of the physically handicapped adults is the hardest problem encountered by the workers in their behalf. But unless this problem be tackled successfully, the whole purpose of the training and education of the physically handicapped will hardly be of any significance either for the physically disabled or for the community.

It is indeed a paradox that the people at large, who are, at times, quite generous in subsidizing the educational programmes for the handicapped, refuse legitimate opportunities to these individuals to put their knowledge and experience to economic usefulness. It should be realised by the community that the physically handicapped persons, if not employed at the end of their training, not only remain as permanent social burdens, but all the money and efforts expended towards their training and education, are also thoroughly wasted.

Certain obstacles in the way of a satisfactory vocational adjustment are common both to the handicapped and the non-handicapped, e.g., dearth of economic opportunities, inadequacy of academic and

vocational preparation, personality deficiencies, and so on; while, certain other impediments are experienced by the handicapped alone, such as, severity of the handicap, i.e., when one handicap is accompanied by some other physical or mental disabilities, transportation difficulties, labour legislations, etc. The first of these hindrances is quite obvious, and the only ameliorative measure is the elimination of the apparently concomitant factors of one handicap. The transportation difficulties may be obviated if provisions are made to bring the handicapped persons to the places of work or if arrangements are made for them to do their work in their homes.

Regarding the legislations designed to promote labour welfare, it is ironically true that most of these enactments have gone against the interests of the handicapped. The employers, as a rule, have been extremely chary of hiring handicapped labour in view of the Workmen's Compensation Act, the Minimum Wages Act, and the laws governing industrial and social insurance. Some measures have, however, been adopted in some countries to counteract the severity of the operation of these statutes in relation to the handicapped. For instance, the handicapped individuals have been permitted to waive their right to compensation in the event of an injury, and the employers, willing to hire handicapped persons, have been granted special licences by which they are legally empowered to pay sub-minimum wages to these employees. The question which has recently engaged the attention of the workers for the physically handicapped is that the employers are too often tempted to take advantage of their handicapped workers and pay them such low wages as are sure to lead to their pauperization.

It may be observed that the benefits and the advantages, enjoyed by the handicapped with reference to transportation and labour legislations, just indicated, do not exist in India. In the interests of the handicapped in this country, the liquidation of the social backwardness in these vitally important matters is long overdue.

The normal employers are usually reluctant to employ physically handicapped persons, though the latter might be in possession of adequate training and experience. Some countries have adopted legal measures to compel these employers to have handicapped labour. For instance, before the last war, the German factories were required to hire a certain percentage of physically disabled workers. Last year, the British Parliament passed the Disabled Persons Act, compelling the British industrial establishments to engage an allotted portion of physically infirm individuals.

Despite all these Government efforts to place the handicapped, many persons fail to secure positions in general industrial and commercial establishments either for the lack of suitable opportunity or for some other physical or mental deficiencies on the part of these individuals in addition to their particular handicap. It is a truism that in ordinary competitive industries, the physically handicapped persons are "The last to be hired" and "The first to be fired." In order to remedy this state of affairs, many special factories, known as "Sheltered Workshops," have been set up, where the handicapped can carry on their work with comparative ease and greater sense of security. In America, the National Recovery Act of 1935 defines a sheltered workshop as "A charitable institution or activities thereof, conducted not for profit, but for the purpose of providing remunerative employment for

physically, mentally, or socially handicapped workers " The handicapped individuals are paid according to their productive capacity, and those whose earnings fail to reach the accepted minimum standards of living are compensated with additional money in the form of augmentation of wages. Owing to the payment of these financial benefits as well as slow and inefficient production, almost every sheltered workshop has to be subsidized in varying degrees, rising as high as to 50 per cent of its total expenditure in some cases.

Those who are too old or are too severely handicapped to travel to a sheltered workshop everyday are provided with employment under what is known as "Home Workers' Scheme." The State agencies for the handicapped in America and Great Britain send the required tools and materials to the homes of these persons and take the responsibility of marketing the products made by these home workers. The cost of materials is deducted from the sale proceeds and the balance is given to these home bound people as wages. In this case, the income of a handicapped person is augmented in order to bring it up to the approved minimum standard.

It is quite apparent to all that neither the Government nor the people of this country have paid any serious attention to the acute problems of the vocational adjustment of the physically handicapped. The inevitable result has been that the overwhelming majority of this afflicted section of humanity has resorted to mendicancy—open or disguised. This has not only dehumanized them beyond recognition, but it has also held back the social and economic progress of the community as a whole.

5. *Psychological problems.*—It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the physically handicapped can and will never

attain a complete social and economic adjustment until and unless there is a wholesome public attitude towards them. They constitute a small minority in every community and their fate, like that of any other minority group, is largely dependent on the ideas and dispositions of the majority. Unfortunately, the physically normal people, by and large, have very poor and fantastic notions about the needs and abilities of the handicapped. In order to change this public attitude, the emotional life of the physically handicapped, their intellectual powers, and their personality patterns have to be discovered by means of suitable psychological measurements, and these discoveries have to be disseminated among the people at large.

The question may be asked: Why should the community be disturbed with the problems of the physically handicapped who constitute only a microscopic minority? The answer is simple: The handicapped, though small in number, actually run into millions, and, with such a vast section of humanity lagging behind educationally and economically, the integral progress of society as a whole will definitely be held back. This sociological approach to work for the physically handicapped has found an admirable expression in the following extracts from the report of the Whitehouse Conference on Child Health and Protection:—

"If we want civilization to march forward, it will march not only on the feet of healthy children, but beside them, shoulder to shoulder, must go those others—those children we have called 'handicapped'—the lame ones, the blind, the deaf, and those sick in body and mind. All these children are ready to be enlisted in this moving army, ready to make their contribution to human progress, to bring what they have of intelligence, of capacity, of spiritual beauty. American Civilization cannot ignore them".

# INDIAN FAMILIES TODAY AND THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

ANJILVEL V. MATTHEW

The economic distress of the average Indian home, writes Dr. Matthew, interferes with the normal physical development of the pre school child. His emotional needs which are possibly of still greater importance do not receive adequate attention. In the following article, Dr. Matthew emphasises the need of rousing the nation to the importance of safeguarding the physical and mental health of children.

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In considering the situations that face the Indian home today, the first thing that strikes the observer is its economic position. The fact on the one hand that its economic position has been unsatisfactory for a number of decades and on the other hand that this unsatisfactory position is not today peculiar only to India does not make it any the less worthy of our attention. The economic distress of the typical Indian home not only makes it impossible to provide adequate food and clothes for the child, but also interferes with his education, health, and emotional development.

*Education in the nursery stage.*--When we talk of the education of the pre-school child, we do not think of an ordinary primary school, for we are here concerned with the problems of those who are regarded as too young to need formal schooling. Education, however, is something that starts much earlier than the school stage, and in this earlier stage also there is the inter-play of those who are subject to education and those who fill the role of educators. The chief difference between education in this and the later stages is that here the educational process takes place mostly on the unconscious level. Nevertheless, the education that the child gets in the home on the unconscious, at any rate, on the non-explicit level is something that remains with him all his life and gives it a direction and colour peculiar to itself. It is in the home that he

begins to get mastery over language, the instrument of man's social and cultural relations, of his contact with those who are away from him in time and in geographical distance. What makes it possible for man to have wider and more intelligent contacts with others than animals is that he can intelligently form notions and concepts regarding things with which he does not come into direct contact. This approach to things that are not concrete and are not immediately present before the senses is made possible through language. It is in the home that language is first picked up. So also, the foundations of good manners and customs, of aesthetic sense, and of moral sense are laid in the home. These factors which make cultured human life what it is, superior to animal life as well as primitive life, are learned in the home; and those who educate the child in this most important manner do it without often visualizing clearly the far-reaching effect of what they do. Neither the educators nor the educated realize that they are engaged in an educational process. Hence, the educational status of the home in which the child grows up should be taken into account when we talk of his upbringing. The educational status of the home depends a great deal on its economic position.

*Economic situation in the Indian home.*--The economic position of the home affects the health of the growing child. Many Indian children are undernourished.



Though ours is mainly an agricultural country, people starve in the midst of possible plenty. With their parents and other relatives, children also starve in thousands of homes. I remember a talk I had with a missionary lady a few years ago (before World War II broke out). When we discussed the deplorably low wages that primary school teachers were receiving, she said that teachers were able to live on seven rupees a month in the villages. I answered that they were not able to live on seven rupees a month, they starved on it: they could not buy with it a sufficient quantity of nourishing food, milk or milk products, much less could they provide their children with sufficient clothes or with books and other school materials for their education. Primary school teachers today are getting in many places about three times the amount they used to get in pre-war days as wages, but the cost of living has gone up four or five times higher than the prewar level; and even in prewar days teachers could not make anything like a decent living on their pay. What is true of primary school teachers is true of a large number of other workers; they too on an average do not get enough of the bare necessities of life in spite of their honest efforts to make both ends meet. That they live, do not mean that they live in any satisfactory or adequate manner.

As most of our people live on starvation level, without means to buy sufficient quantities of the most elementary necessities of life such as food and clothing, their children grow up as poor specimens of *yoṁaṁ* humanity—illnourished, half-naked. Possibly their half-nakedness is in a way a means of their not dying in larger numbers; they get some compensating vitamin strength through their exposure to the sun. An ill-nourished

infancy and childhood is a poor basis on which to build a powerful and prosperous nation that can speak with its enemies at the gate. Children should get a fairly good quantity of milk, at least a pint a day; but in many of our homes, in thousands and thousands of them, a whole family of five to seven members does not have an intake of a pint of milk a day. In a recent session of one of the FAO Committees a resolution was moved, and accepted without a dissent, "to set up an International Children's Emergency Committee to prepare schemes for the rapidly increasing consumption of milk by nursing and expectant mothers as well as young children and supplementing feeding in schools as the most practical means of improving nutritional standards and safeguarding the health of the most valued sections of the community". (U.P.A. News Agency, September 7, 1947). Resolutions of committees for inaugurating schemes for a world-wide effort to help children do not yet have the promise of fulfilment in them. All the same, it is cheering to see that a representative world organisation, which the FAO is, takes thought of this vital problem. What the FAO cannot effectively do today can be tackled more effectively by national organisations, if they have the will to do it.

The consciousness of people have begun to be roused in this respect in our country, as witnessed by the attempts in some of our cities like Bombay and Madras to give milk to children in schools. A small but highly progressive state in South India, Cochin, has introduced noon-feeding in schools. A much wider awakening on the part of the nation is necessary in order that the true wealth of the country, our manhood—especially that of the next generation, the little boys and girls—may be safeguarded through large scale nutritive efforts on the part of the State. It must be

recognized that the necessities of life of the under-privileged is not something that can be provided for by the unavailing efforts of the poor themselves nor by the charities of the rich; it must be tackled by the planned efforts of the whole community. We need not condemn the foreign government that was in power in our country for not doing something that they were not able to do in their own country. The eyes of the people have only in very recent times been opened to the fact that the wealth and resources of the country should be at the disposal of all. We should so husband our resources that all our children have enough food, especially milk and milk-products, and other necessities of life.

*The emotional needs of the child.*—The emotional needs of children are possibly of still greater importance. What are these needs? I may mention four of them, the need for affection, for adventure, for security and for appreciation.

1. *The need for affection.*—The need for affection is experienced by all children. Very small children, even those of only a few weeks of age, can feel the nature of the environment in which they find themselves and can react to it either in a healthy or in an unhealthy way. The best of situations are unsatisfactory to children in some respect or other, and therefore form occasions of dissatisfaction and uneasiness. Human nature's glory is that it can meet these frustrating situations with a certain amount of success. The absence of the mother even for a few minutes makes the small child uneasy. In taking the mother's breast into its mouth the baby feels as if it were incorporating into himself the whole mother; and the failure of the mother to give him the breast, whenever he feels like having it, is interpreted by him as unkindness and cruelty. Breast-feeding is essential to the emotional stability of the child, and

to try to wean him abruptly or at too early a period creates for him more than the natural share of frustration which should fall to the lot of a normal child. There is a tendency on the part of certain sections of working class women and rich society ladies to deny the child his natural food—the food that comes from the mother's breast which is really more than food in the physiological sense of the word. Through the mother's breast he is enjoying the mother's presence with the touch and warmth of her body which has a soothing and reassuring effect both on his spirit and his body.

The need of affection is satisfied to some extent by the way he is fed; but the child has other ways of realizing whether he is loved as he ought to be. Many of our homes are poor, and the parents cannot provide their children with all the things they need; nevertheless, even a poor home is often better than a well-provided orphanage or public institution. In the latter, children often fail to get the individual attention and love which they receive in their own home however humble that may be from the economic point of view. Where the child does not get this love, he is deprived of the greatest single thing that goes into the development of an emotionally well-adjusted, cheerful and co-operative member of society.

2. *The need for adventure.*—The child needs love; he needs wise love. Love is the most creative thing in life, but when it is foolishly bestowed it can be harmful. No mother should so love the child as to prevent his developing into an independent individual. No man, great or small, can be said to lead an efficient life unless he leads his own life, unless he takes responsibility for himself and lives it adventurously. *The need for adventure* is one of the primary needs of the growing child. He

should be able to play about in his own way, not in the way that the mother wants him to play. He should exercise his body and do little prafiks as nature impels him. He should not be protected from all possible mishaps, but should be given freedom to exercise his limbs and to experiment with his play-materials. Parents who do not want to be disturbed by the noise and ceaseless activities of children and confront them with "Don't do that, Don't do this..." will do well to pause for a while to think what would happen if young children had obeyed them absolutely. If children managed to obey all the commands of their parents and did only what they were explicitly allowed to do, what tame, listless, lifeless creatures would fill our homes! Luckily children cannot and do not listen to all the prohibitory orders of the adults who have command over them. Parents should recognize this fact and let children express themselves in their active spontaneous ways. An active child is any day a more promising specimen of humanity than one whose reactions are of inactive, passive nature. If children were not adventurous, they would not sit up, they would not walk, they would not play with cats, dogs and other pet animals, they would not climb fences and trees, they would not strike a blow against other children who try to bully over them; for, in all these situations, there is the likelihood of some painful consequences arising. Very often in our homes children's play is not tolerated unless it is of a harmless or passive nature. We have a tendency to praise the well-behaved child; but modern psychology warns us that punctilious good behaviour on the part of a child may rather be a sign of hidden nervousness.

3. *The need for security.*—Another fundamental need of children is *security*. The question of security arises in the wake of

the needs for affection and adventure. That children should have freedom to live their own lives does not mean that they are happy if there is no restraint on them. As a matter of fact, very few people, even among adults, are fit to enjoy perfect freedom. In the case of most people, perfect freedom is a myth; and there are vast numbers of people who would like someone else to take charge of their life and make decisions for them. This attitude accounts for the uprising of autocratic dictators, now and then, in the history of nations; it is as if people got tired of thinking and deciding for themselves and wanted to be spared the troublesome task of exercising freedom. They have as it were a fear of freedom and want to escape it. In the case of children, though they like to express themselves in their own ways, they prefer to do it in a stable world. They and we all have to take certain things for granted; we cannot think out for ourselves each step in our life. Accepting certain things as fixed, we can devote our thoughts to other matters that may change. In doing problems in algebra, even an expert cannot arrive at solutions of problems if there are too many "variables." Little children want to make their experiments with life on the assumption that just as the physical world has a fairly fixed nature, the world of men and women also has a certain amount of fixity about it. Where this is not the case, they are perplexed and confused. If the father and mother are loving people the child can count upon certain reactions from them. If one of the parents is loving and the other strict and inclined to scold and punish, he experiences a certain amount of uncertainty when he thinks of the possible consequences of his actions. If the same parent is sometimes loving and long-bearing and at other times impatient and fault-finding, uncertainty grows into perplexity and confusion. In some homes

if children commit mistakes they admit them frankly; in other homes they tell lies so that parents may not know the truth. Children are afraid that if they tell the truth they may be punished. Telling lies is an indication of the fact that the speaker has no faith that others would deal with him with sympathetic understanding. It does not mean that leniency and indulgence is the only kind of treatment that calls forth security on the part of the youngsters. Children are ready to conform to certain lines of conduct so long as they know what is expected of them. Thus rules and conventions and certain formalities are accepted by them as a matter of course; and we help them to lead lives of discipline when we accustom them to such a stable order of things. In other words, freedom for the self-expression of children does not mean license and indulgence, for children themselves feel relieved when the task of independent judgment and decision is not enforced on them in regard to all matters of conduct.

*The need for appreciation.*—Children need the appreciation of those around them. Even grown-up people want to feel and sometimes to hear that others think well of their performances. Men in authority understand that all that others say of them is not the truth, and that possibly some of those who do not praise them much can be relied upon to be more loyal to them than certain others whose lips are full of praise. Nevertheless, they are inclined to listen more readily to those that speak well of them. In the case of little children, praise is something that is vital to their emotional adjustment. If you think that those around you are indifferent to your work, you will not have much of an incentive to do things. This is especially true in the case of children. Adults may in spite of want of praise and

appreciation carry on good work out of sentiments of loyalty and personal responsibility; but the sentiments of children are of a more elementary nature, being centred more on the persons immediately round them than on abstract virtues and ideals.

Praise and appreciation is the life-breath of little children. It is a pity that parents and other relatives often regard as a nuisance the honest efforts of children to be helpful to their elders. It is true that grown-up individuals can do a number of things without children's help and, still more, that children by putting in their unskilful and inexperienced hands are likely to delay some of the work and occasionally spoil it. For instance, mothers are afraid that the little ones may break crockery and may interfere with their race with time in getting things done for the household. As for fathers, are they not often inclined to shout at children and drive them away from their work? In this matter there is a redeeming feature in the poorer homes, for poor parents give a chance to their children to be practically useful through helpful activities. In such homes, however, there is another dangerous possibility of children's need-to-be-useful being exploited by parents. Children want to help, and helping in real things—in real life situations—has a value of its own which is higher than helping in seemingly serious but really artificial situations. Accepting the help of children in real life-situations is, however, often overdone by those parents who try to make children work as if they were grown-up persons.

*The need for play.*—Children want to express themselves through appropriate activities, but they cannot keep on doing the same kind of work for a long time. They want to play. The essence of play is that it is spon-

taneous activity which a person takes upon himself to be engaged in and from which the conception of the "must" of work is absent. The play habit is a great acquisition for grown-up persons: it enables them to use their time pleurably and it provides them with opportunities for social relations. To the child it is more, a vital necessity. Earlier in this study we noticed the importance of self-expression in the life of children, and this takes the form of play. In most Indian homes, no plan or thought is bestowed on children's play. Working class parents have no time to spare for the play of children—they consider that they have done all they can do for their children if they get them food, clothes, and some medicine when they fall ill. For all other things pertaining to children, they have no time—and children are neglected. In cities all people—both rich and poor—find so many things to attend to in their hurried life that they think they have little time to spare for the child. Rich or poor, very few people in India think it their duty to make arrangements for the play activities of children; and a fewer number think that they should themselves find time to play with children. Children, both in our cities and villages, are as a rule not provided with toys and other play materials. Our awakened civic sense leads us to think that somehow we should make provision for the games of older children and of the adolescent, but we have not yet begun to realise that the play-life of the small child is at least equally important. As a matter of fact, the latter's play-life is possibly even more important than that of his elder brothers and sisters. It is usually recognized that it is through play that the small child acquires control over his own body and is able to exercise skill with his hands and feet.

Play has another very great value, which modern psychology and psychiatric methods have begun to stress. Young children have feelings of hostility and aggression, arising out of their sense of frustration; and they must express them in some way or other. If they try to do it directly, in overt ways, they are reprimanded and punished; and to repress them entirely is not possible and, even if it were possible, is harmful. In such a predicament the play-habit comes as a great help, being a means of releasing their feelings in harmless, in-offensive ways. Those who have read George Eliot's *Mill on the Floss* might remember how the child Margaret hammered nails into the head of her doll whenever she got angry with her aunts. Modern psychology shows that Margaret's experience is the experience of most children—they want to vent their feelings on something or other, and play and play materials come handy for this purpose.

*Children may need psychiatric help.*—Reference to the feelings of hostility of the child brings us to the last factor I wish to discuss in the situations that face Indian families today. It is recognized that the physical ailments of children should be attended to just as those of grown-up people. But, it is not recognized, as widely as it should be, that both adults and children have personality troubles that have an emotional origin which demand equal attention. When personality troubles take the grave form of malady known as psychosis or insanity, attempts are made to consult a qualified person. Such qualified persons, skilled psychiatrists, are very few in India; and they are consulted only when personal maladjustment has reached so grave a stage as to make the patient lose entire contact with reality. Minor and less advanced forms of mental troubles are, however, the ones in which psychiatrists can be of the greatest service. Such cases

are not usually referred to them in our country. It should be realised that these troubles do not come upon grown-up persons suddenly and abruptly; they have their roots extending right up to the early years of childhood. Hence it is most important that personality troubles are brought to the notice of qualified psychiatrists.

*Of vital national importance.*—Unfortunately, such psychiatrists are conspicuous by their absence in most parts of India; nor have we generally begun to feel their need. Demand and supply are interdependent, and the present case is a clear example of both being absent. If there were more psychiatrists, parents would have referred the problems of their children to these experts, and if parents had felt the

need of doctors who can deal with psychic troubles prospective medical workers would have specialised in medical psychology. This vicious circle should be broken somewhere, and it will be most helpful and appropriate if influential agencies like the All India Women's Conference, the Indian Medical Council and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences take a lead in rousing the nation to the importance of safeguarding the mental health of children and of providing heads of families with skilled help whenever the need arises. That we have a long way to go before this goal is realized may be gathered from the fact that a course of lectures in psychology has been provided for in medical colleges in India only during the last fifteen years.

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## NOTES AND NEWS

ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WORK, 1947

*Welcome Address by The Hon'ble Mr. Justice M. C. Chagla,  
Chairman of the Reception Committee*

It gives me very great pleasure as Chairman of the Reception Committee to welcome to this City social workers and representatives of social service agencies from all over India. I consider it the proud privilege of Bombay to be the venue of the first session of this All India Conference of Social Work.

Social work in all its aspects has assumed vital and paramount importance since India achieved her independence on the 15th of August, because we must never allow ourselves to forget that one of the most cherished goals of free India is social justice. It is not enough that in free India men should be equal before the law and that evenhanded justice should be meted out by courts of law. Nor is it enough that our political institutions should be democratic institutions and that we should conform to all the democratic principles—that men should be free, that there should be freedom of press, freedom of association and freedom of worship. It is equally important that there should be social justice in this country if we are to justify our freedom and establish our claim to be a progressive nation prepared to be judged by the highest standards laid down by thinkers and public men all the world over.

What is social justice? Every human being belongs to some society or other. It may be a primitive society or it may be an advanced society and as such he owes a duty to society and he owes a loyalty to society. He has to obey its laws, and not only its laws but also its unwritten conventions. That is one side of the picture and

unfortunately that is the side which is usually emphasised. It is apt to be forgotten that society in its turn owes a debt to every one who is its member. The Victorian ideal used to be the greatest good of the greatest number, but that ideal has now become a little tarnished and worn out. The ideal of today is that we must work for the greatest good of all members of society leaving out none from the all pervasive effects of social justice.

There are certain fundamental social rights to which every citizen is entitled. The first and foremost is his right to work. I am using the word "right" and not "duty", because every son of Adam has to earn his bread in the sweat of his brow and to that extent his duty is plain and simple. But there are thousands of able bodied men gifted with intelligence and talent for whom society can find nothing to do, however willing they might be to work, and it is this recognition of the right to work, which, to my mind, is the first principle of social justice. Every citizen is also entitled to be free from want. No society can furnish to every person luxury or comfort. Equally so, no society can refuse to a citizen those elementary rights which alone make it possible for a man to realise his manhood and not to sink to the degradation of beasts and animals. Every one is also entitled, while he remains a useful member of society, to feel that he has security, not security in many possessions, or in riches, or in the hoardings of a lifetime, but security in the thought that in his old age the labour and hard work that he has put in would give him deserving comfort and ease and that in the event

of his being cut off in the prime of his life, his dependents would be looked after by society till they are in a position to be on their legs.

We are often prone to pass severe judgments on the failings and shortcomings of our fellowmen. In doing so, we often forget to what a large extent this is due to frustrations and maladjustments for which society is largely responsible. Our function, therefore, should be not so much to judge as to understand, not to condemn but to abolish the cause of frustrations and to set right the maladjustments.

A clear cut distinction must be drawn between charity and social justice. When you give charity, you are giving something to which the person receiving it is not entitled. It almost inevitably engenders in the mind of the donor a sense of superiority that he has done well in the eye of the Lord; on the other hand, in doing social justice you are only paying society's debts to the person who is its creditor, and whether the debt is paid by the society as such or by individuals constituting the society, there is nothing more sanctimonious about the deed than the discharging of one's duty.

In our country, in all communities we have had a very high sense of benevolence and charity; munificent donations have been given to relieve poverty and distress and to advance education and other deserving causes. But, unfortunately, we have on the whole lacked a social sense. We have rarely thought in terms of society, Our thoughts have either run in communal grooves or if we are sufficiently broad-minded we have taken a humanitarian view. But underlying all this has always been that feeling that the poor and the downtrodden deserve to be helped by those who are better off. We have never felt strongly that poverty, disease, illiteracy are all social evils which can be eradicated.

In order to eradicate them the first step is to hate them passionately and to realise that these evils were not ordained by God but are man made and can be done away with by man.

Unfortunately—and I wish to be quite frank—both the great religions in India, the Hindu and the Muslim religions have inculcated a philosophy which has had the unfortunate effect of making men tolerate these evils. The Hindu with his theory of *karma* often believes that what a man suffers here is preordained and that he is born in this world for the sins that he committed in a past life. The Muslim with his belief in *kismet* equally believes that suffering, if destined, has to be gone through cheerfully and inevitably. This is the philosophy we have to fight against. There is nothing inevitable or sacred or ordained about poverty, disease or illiteracy. It is a comfortable and convenient philosophy, which, people to whom the Gods have been kind and who have been brought up in the lap of luxury, hug to themselves in order not to be reminded that millions of men in this country are living in the most abject poverty and in conditions which are a disgrace to any civilised society.

One of the problems this Conference will have to tackle will be to what extent social service must be rendered by private effort and to what extent by the State. The doctrine of *laissez-faire* has already died a natural death. No one now suggests that it is not the duty of the State to redress social wrongs and social injustices. But in our country the task is so colossal that it is impossible to expect the State on the threshold of its nascent existence to undertake the gigantic work of being the sole dispenser of social justice which ultimately it must become. Therefore, for a long time to come, there will always be



need and pressing need for 'a host of individual social workers and private social agencies, and I am sure during its deliberations this Conference will consider how the work of these individuals and agencies should be co-ordinated so as to produce the best and most satisfactory result. I do not wish to suggest that the State has not even in the immediate future to play a very big part in doing social justice. No individual and no private agency can possibly have the funds or the organisation which are at the disposal of government.

It is indeed a curious irony of history that when a country is waging war its patriotism touches the highest level and people are prepared to pour out millions in the work of destruction, and also more nobly in alleviating suffering which is caused by that very destruction; but when the country goes back to peace, somehow the tide of patriotism begins to run out and we have not the enthusiasm or the farsightedness to spend a hundredth of what we were prepared to spend on devising and forging devilish instruments of destruction.

For a long time thinking men in India have felt that our social conscience requires to be roused and attempts have been made from time to time to organise social work and put it on a sound footing. As early as 1889, we had the Indian National Social Conference with whose work the name of Mr. Justice Ranade will always be associated. That Conference went on for nearly 35 years. Then we had the Social Service Conference, the first session of which was held in Calcutta in December, 1917 and its first President was no less a

person than Mahatma Gandhi, one of the greatest social workers India or perhaps the world has produced. But the continuity of these conferences has never been kept up and they seem to be more spasmodic than something with an internal strength which goes on growing and expanding. People with a sensitive social conscience have also established in different parts of the country *Seva Sadans* and *Seva Samitis* and Social Service Leagues, but I am glad that the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Bombay, one of the finest, if not the finest, institutions of its kind in India, ultimately gave a lead in the matter and called a meeting of various social welfare agencies in this City to organise an All India Conference of Social Work and this Conference, which I have the honour to address, is the result of that lead given by the teachers and *alumni* of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. I sincerely hope that this Conference will succeed in drawing the attention of Government and of the citizens of this State to the many social ills from which India suffers and also in pointing out the ways and means by which conditions in this country can be ameliorated. I hope the work of the Conference will not end by merely passing resolutions and then breaking up to meet again after a year. The object of the organisers is to do something practical and concrete, not merely to arouse the social conscience, but to make both Government and individuals to work in their own respective spheres so that our free and independent India should not only boast of a political democracy but should become a country where her citizens can lead a good and happy life.

*Inaugural Address by The Hon'ble Mr. B. G. Kher, Prime Minister of Bombay*

It is indeed a great privilege for me to be invited to inaugurate this Conference where so many distinguished men and women from different parts of the country have assembled to consider problems connected with the organisation of social work. I am grateful to you for having given me this opportunity to meet such a galaxy of social workers and to revive contacts with many old friends. The object of this Conference, as we all know, is to enable social workers from different fields to exchange ideas and experience and, in particular, to assist in establishing a standing organisation for studying problems, disseminating information and providing facilities for exchange of views regarding social work. In a vast country like ours not only are social problems different in different areas and groups, but they are even related to different stages of social development and a central clearing house of information is bound to be of great value. Besides, as each social worker is naturally restricted in practice to a small part of the total field, opportunities of organised contact are essential in order to make the accumulated experience of some generally available to all. I trust that the deliberations of this conference will lead to a clearer perception of the many problems which are going to be discussed here and will result in establishing an organisation with a definite programme of co-ordinated activity of social service by scientific methods.

I would take this occasion to make a plea for a true and correct appreciation of what we understand by society. "The whole succession of men during many ages" said Pascal "should be considered as one man ever living and constantly learning." This is the true organic view of humanity regarded either, as a single whole or in its several races, nations or communities. The

*Purusha Sukta* of the Hindu has given us the same conception. "The apophthegm is not primarily of political or of ethical significance but is a statement of natural history." Speaking of the ascent of man, in his beautiful book "Work and Wealth—A Human Valuation" Hobson says, "There is no clear evidence of the continuous ascent of man regarded as an individual, at any rate within historical times. There is evidence of the ascent of human society towards a larger and closer complexity of human relations and a clearer intellectual and moral consciousness. This means that mankind as a whole and its several societies are becoming more capable of a human valuation and of a collective conduct of affairs guided by this conscious process." So long as society is spoken of and thought of as an abstraction, no social conduct is, in his opinion, sound or safe. "For an abstraction is incapable of calling forth our reverence, regard or love. And until we attribute to society such a form and degree of personality as can evoke in us those interests and emotions which personality alone can win, the social-will will not be able to perform great works." Here is food for thought for all of us and we should pursue this line of thought even if it is difficult.

The traditions of social service in this country have been of the highest. There have always been thousands of men and women who, in their own quiet manner, have devoted themselves to the service of their fellow beings. Their example cannot but inspire humility and reverence in all of us. "Among many human desires there is a unique desire—the desire to do right" and among other moral resources men possess "a sense of obligation towards the good as their mind conceives it." That is why there have been, are, and always will be social workers. Social workers, however,

are usually so deeply absorbed in *doing* social work that they rarely have the time to think *about* social work. And so, if social effort is to be directed along scientific lines it would be useful to survey the situation as a whole and perceive the fundamentals of its organisation from time to time.

The aim of social work, as generally understood, is to remove social injustice, to relieve distress, to prevent suffering and to assist the weaker members of society to rehabilitate themselves and their families, and, in short, to fight the five giant evils of (1) physical want, (2) disease, (3) ignorance, (4) squalor, and (5) idleness. We must analyse the various aspects of these problems. Connected as I am with the machinery of Government, I may perhaps be permitted to refer primarily to the problem of "the State and Social Services" which you have put down first in the order of your deliberations. I do not know what specific problems are going to be discussed under this head, but I should like to say something on this which, to my mind, is a fundamental break with the existing ways of thinking.

In the past, Government in this country has held itself more or less aloof from the field of social service and it is but natural that social workers should be agitated over the proper relation of the State to social service in future. I should like to remind you that we are now meeting in a new atmosphere of freedom where the old inhibitions no longer hold. The State now belongs to the people and the fulfilment of the highest functions of the State lies in its transformation into a social service corporation. You have no doubt heard of the famous expression "constructive programme" of Mahatma Gandhi. He has always maintained that the fulfilment of the constructive programme is Swaraj. I am sure you know the all comprehensive

nature of the constructive programme. Instead, therefore, of thinking merely in terms of a *relation* between the State and social services, the State must be looked upon as an agency of social service and all its activities must hereafter be judged by reference *solely* to the social interests which they promote. The truth of this statement may not perhaps be grasped by those who have been accustomed to look upon social work as a distinct field, clearly divided from political and economic reform. This compartmental attitude may have some academic usefulness even now, and was, perhaps, justified in the context of our political subjection in the past, but it is, I submit, wholly inappropriate to the new concept of the State in which we want to live. Political and economic reconstruction are in fact the foundations of social welfare. The main function of our political and economic organisation today is to create conditions which prevent the rise of social distress and social maladjustment. The State and social workers are really attacking two sides of the same problem—the preventive and the curative. In trying to abolish ignorance, poverty, drink, dirt and disease, the State is doing social work of the highest magnitude. The State is, therefore, a social service organisation, *par excellence*. You will see the propriety of this remark if you consider the trend of the activities of UNO, UNESCO, ILO, etc.

I have said this in order to emphasise the new outlook that must animate our efforts in future. It must make us realise that social work in the sense in which the term is generally understood is only a part of the total effort required from the community as a whole to provide a healthy and happy life for its members. Society exists in the co-operation of individuals. "Once let us realise society as possessing a unity and life of its own to the furtherance

of which each of us contributes in the pursuance of the particular life we call our own, the so-called sacrifices we are called upon to make for that longer life will be considered no longer as encroachments upon but enlargements of our personality." We must substitute for the attainment of individual welfare the ideal and the standard of social welfare. If we do so, it is necessary for the State as well as social workers to perceive their functions in this new context. I do not say that our State is in fact today fulfilling this function to your or my satisfaction. We have just taken over an administrative machinery which was geared perhaps to other purposes and it will naturally take some time for the State to ensure for its service a body of able and devoted servants inspired by this new purpose and selfless activity. I am sure the Conference will suggest ways and means how this could be done in the best and quickest manner. Much could perhaps be done by providing facilities for higher education in social sciences in the Universities, or by instituting compulsory courses of practical social work, or by providing specialised training in social activities; but the main problem is to instil in the minds of all who are connected with the functions of Government, the *spirit* of service. Everything that increases knowledge of social conditions and methods of work is valuable, but the capacity and willingness to put that knowledge to proper use are much more important and will be evolved by a true appreciation of the nature of society.

The problem is not merely one of educating the civil servant. To my mind, social work will have found its true place in our life only when all members of society are made to look upon it as a part and parcel of their way of living. Instead of considering social work as something out-

side, and, therefore, distinct from our personal work, we have to cultivate a new outlook by which whatever we do in practice of our career, profession or business is in discharge of our social responsibilities. Until this is done, the majority of the members of the community will be living a double life in which social work is looked upon as a diversion or sort of "extra," spare time work to be done at leisure. That way, we shall continue to witness the tragedy by which we ourselves contribute to the creation of the problems we are called upon to solve. This will be ultimately avoided only by the provision of a proper ethical background to our system of education and the creation of economic institutions which make for comparative equality of opportunity. Both these are tasks in which the State is called upon to give the lead.

Let us, however, realise that, given the best possible social order, the most enlightened State and the most responsible individual conduct, there will still be need for tackling certain specialised problems of social work which must be dealt with by a body of workers trained for the purpose and able to devote themselves whole time to it. Want is bound to be there. For, as has been said, "However much human ingenuity may increase the treasures which nature provides for the satisfaction of human needs, they can never be sufficient to satisfy all human wants, for man unlike other creatures is gifted and cursed with an imagination which extends his appetites beyond the requirements of subsistence. Human society will never escape the problem of the equitable distribution of the physical and cultural goods which provide for the fulfilment and preservation of human life." The magnitude of this problem in our country is unbelievably great. In addition to several age-old problems,

we have with us the recent social changes due to the economic and educational impact of the West. Add to these the almost staggering problem of rehabilitation brought about by forced migrations of millions of people during the last few weeks, and you will see that there is an almost unlimited field for social work. There are many aspects of the problems created by this social dislocation which can be directly tackled by Government and these are being attended to as far as lies within the resources of the State. But you will agree that there are many others which will have to be taken up by individuals and by private social agencies, for there is a special need today for a band of social workers capable of identifying themselves with the sufferers, living among them, sharing their common sorrows, and yet imparting to them the necessary courage to help rebuild themselves and their homes. I say this because I am convinced that in handling human problems of a delicate nature, the personal touch plays a very significant part. Organisations of social work are no doubt necessary if the problems are to be solved systematically and on a large scale, but we would be defeating our own purpose if we made social work so completely institutional and therefore impersonal as to deprive it of the human element in it. Spontaneity which is the very essence of social service must be preserved at all costs.

In the opinion of some great thinkers, "Political reforms cannot be expected to produce much general betterment unless

large numbers of individuals undertake the transformation of their personality," a radical and permanent transformation of personality is their prescription. Meanwhile, "politicians can do something to create a social environment which will promote this object." I would suggest that in setting up institutions for training social workers an attempt should be made to develop the personality and character of the trainee so as to produce a disciplined and well-equipped young person capable of handling problems with sympathy and imagination.

It is the privilege of social workers to do their most arduous duties in a silent and unostentatious manner, away from the glare of publicity and unmindful of the laurels that may be heaped on their comrades in other fields. The supreme compensation for their endeavour lies in the satisfaction they feel and the joy they bring to the homes of their less fortunate brothers. Virtue is its own reward. We must first concentrate on what is practical and urgent. There are no cut-and-dried solutions of social problems. After all, the search for right living is a continuous process. Social problems assume new patterns in every age and therefore need new solutions. We can only do our best by approaching them in a spirit of inquiry, and apply ourselves to their solutions with all the sincerity of purpose we can command so as to fulfil the purpose of human life and make it happy, healthy and worth living. I declare this Conference open. I wish it all success.

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*Report regarding the Organising of the Conference by  
Dr. J. F. Bulsara, Hon. General Secretary*

None of you assembled here may have any doubt about the propriety of holding an All India Conference of Social Work

at this juncture. When the country is passing through a tremendous socio-economic upset and upheaval, and we are faced

with a human exodus from long-established homelands on an unprecedented scale in the history of man, we can appreciate all the more readily the significance of such a Conference, or the need for correct leadership in the sphere of human relief and rehabilitation on the part of workers, who have spent their lives in tackling such problems and are fitted by their training and experience to give guidance in such matters. All the same, the delegates who have come from far and near would like to know an account of the activities that have resulted in the holding of this Conference. With your permission, therefore, I shall try to give you a brief account of the efforts that have gone into the organising of this Conference and the object the organisers have in view.

At a time when, with the morning rays of independence dawning on the horizon, our country's energies were being bent unitedly towards creative and constructive work for the socio-economic, educational and cultural amelioration of the masses, the Alumni Association of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, in the beginning of this year, conceived the happy idea of organising a Conference of Social Work on an All India basis. One of the objects kept in view was to bring social workers, scattered all over the country doing field work in various spheres, together on one platform in order to enable them to discuss their common problems, exchange their varied experiences and take counsel together so as to lead to mutual advantage, and to the improvement of their work and technique. Another objective was to explore the possibilities of establishing on a permanent footing an Indian Conference of Social Work, so as to help in co-ordinating welfare services affecting the peoples of India, give advice and guidance, and act as a clearing house of information on all

scientific and systematic relief and rehabilitation work done in the country.

Accordingly, a preliminary meeting of various social service agencies in the City of Bombay was convened in May, 1947 and the subject discussed thereat. This meeting of the Organising Committee with Dr. J. M. Kumarappa, the Director of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, as Chairman, decided to convene an All India Conference of Social Work, as till then, we had no specific inkling of the subsequent partition of the country. A Working Committee was formed of prominent social workers and other representative interests with Dr. J. M. Kumarappa as Chairman, myself as Honorary General Secretary, Mrs. Mithan J. Lam and Mrs. Khadija Shuffi Tyabji as Joint Hon. Treasurers and Messrs. M. S. Gore and B. Chatterji as Joint Hon. Secretaries. The Working Committee appointed five Sub-Committees to carry out the varied work and commissions inevitable upon the organising of a Conference of this magnitude, viz.:—

- (a) Steering Sub-Committee with Dr. J. M. Kumarappa as Chairman and Mr. T. L. Kochavara as Secretary.
- (b) Constitution Sub-Committee with the Hon'ble Mr. Mangaldas M. Pakvasa as Chairman, Mr. N. H. Pandya as Vice-Chairman and Mr. Meher Nanavatty as Secretary.
- (c) Finance Sub-Committee with Lady Rama Rao as Chairman, Mrs. Bapsey Sabavala as Vice-Chairman and Miss N. B. Sidhwa as Secretary.
- (d) Publicity Sub-Committee with Mr. K. A. Abbas and on his resignation, Mr. Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan as Chairman and

Mr. W. D. Kulkarni as Secretary.

- (e) General Arrangements and Volunteers Organisation Sub-Committee with Mrs. Gulestan R. Billimoria as Chairman and Mr. Meher Nanavatty as Secretary.

The Reception Committee was formed under the able chairmanship of the Hon'ble Mr. Justice M. C. Chagla.

Among all the horses and mares appointed to run this long distance race, somewhat of a tiring nature, there were no flukes or outsiders selected except one and that was your unfortunate Honorary General Secretary. Why a very heavily overworked and busy civic official was selected for this signal honour and taxing task, I have not yet been able to fathom. I suspect there must have been some sinister conspiracy on the part of my friends, Dr. Kumarappa, Mr. Masani, Prof. Choksi, Messrs. Gore and Chatterjee, the secret of which they have not yet divulged to me, but which I hope they will presently do, now that the Conference has been successfully inaugurated.

It is not claimed that this Conference of Social Work is the first of its kind. One called "The Indian National Social Conference" was started as early as 1889 under the guidance of the late Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade to deal with problems of social reform, and held annual sessions almost for 35 years. Thereafter, in 1916, when the Indian National Congress met in Lucknow, the idea of starting an All India Organisation of Social Workers was first conceived at the suggestion of Mr. D. N. Maitra, founder of the Bengal Social Service League, who, I am glad to inform you, has blessed the idea of this Conference, and has asked us to call it not the first but the Fifth All

India Conference. Accordingly, the first Social Service Conference was held at Calcutta in December, 1917, simultaneously with the session of the Indian National Congress. It will gladden your hearts, ladies and gentlemen, to know that the first President of this Conference was no less a personality than the architect of India's freedom, and one of the greatest social workers India has produced, namely, Mahatma Gandhi. The second session of the Conference was held in 1918 at Delhi under the presidentship of no less a distinguished daughter of India than Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the Acting Governor of the United Provinces.

The continuity of the Conference was, however, broken thereafter and efforts were again made in 1922 at the third Social Service Conference in Madras to revive the All India Organisation. The fourth session was held in December, 1923 in Bombay, with Sir Lallubhai Shamaldas, the father of our popular Finance Minister and a sincere social worker, the Hon'ble Mr. Vaikunth Mehta, as the Chairman of the Executive Committee, and Dr. Mrs. Annie Besant, whose birth centenary we celebrated only last month all over the country, as its President. The all India body seems to have again met with mishap and in subsequent years only provincial conferences were held in Madras, Calcutta, Bombay and other places. In view of the chequered history of this attempt, let us sincerely hope, our organisers will show greater grit and not allow this Conference to meet the fate of its predecessors. It is to ward off the evil eye that dogged the steps of the last Conference that we are perhaps wisely changing the name and number of our fresh effort.

While we were carrying on with the work of this Conference, our Chairman received a letter from Mr. Howard R.

Knight, Secretary General of the International Conference of Social Work, U.S.A., asking him to take steps to get a National Committee appointed, so that it could arrange to send delegates or representatives to the International Conference of Social Work to be held in New York in April, 1948. We thought it advisable to place this question of appointing such a National Committee before the Indian Conference of Social Work, the establishment of which on a permanent footing is one of the main objectives of this Conference.

You will thus see, ladies and gentlemen, that the organisers have started the idea of a country-wide Conference not a moment too soon. Not only is the International Conference of Social Work legitimately being revived after its interruption during war years, but the history of a vast world-wide relief organisation like the UNRRA, with the stupendous task of succouring millions of derelict and disrupted citizens, families and even governments entrusted to it, brings home to us the significance and need of social work in a war-distracted world with unbalanced economics all round. Besides, social work is as old as mankind, and India has always given a high place to the virtue of charity and the acts of relieving human or animal suffering. Yet we cannot claim that in the existing socio-economic structure of Indian Society, we are today witnessing a healthy social organism. With more than 50 per cent of our population always on the verge of poverty, with 90 per cent steeped in ignorance and unalphabetism and with nearly 30 per cent suffering from disease, ill-health or undernourishment, we have necessarily to face all the problems that are inevitable upon a highly handicapped and severely maladjusted population—what cannot but be, as it seems to me, *an unhealthy or sick society*. Such social sickness is to be

found in China and parts of the Near Middle, and Far East. Some of the Western countries have been reduced to the same sickly state by the last World War. This social sickness in various spheres of life can be removed by treating the root causes of the malady, if ever we are going to get rid of it and attain a vital, healthy and well integrated social structure. And it has been proved by long experience of social workers that a scientific treatment of social maladies is always less costly in the long run than haphazard or unsystematised relief.

The Western world has learnt by long experience that poverty and its attendant ills cannot be eradicated by *pity or punishment*, which were the remedies long applied all the world over; that its removal demands the study and survey of root causes and their scientific treatment. So long as the theory of pity and punishment held the field, we had, by and large, only private philanthropy and religious orders tackling the problems of human suffering and destitution. The State only interfered when riots or mob violence threatened its existence or the security of the vested interests. All our institutions during this epoch were, therefore, necessarily of a *post-mortem* character. We thought of alms when people went hungry and begging; we thought of dispensaries and hospitals when people got sick and epidemics threatened; we built jails and penitentiaries when criminals violated social safety or the sanctity of ownership of property. All along we tried to relieve obvious human suffering after it had occurred and assumed a virulent external manifestation, and then largely by *post-mortem* remedies and treatment in the nature not of resuscitation but patch-work. All social maladies we took to be natural and inevitable. In our country we even propounded the nebulous theory of *karma* to explain them away and give false unction to our stinging conscience.



We did not look beyond the symptoms of the social diseases, we did not try to attack the root causes, fearing always and arguing that doing so was a more difficult and more costly task. We firmly believed that *palliative* measures were cheaper than *preventive* ones.

But the last eighty years of the study of sociology as a science, the employment of scientific methods of treatment of social ills and handicaps through psychiatric and other humanitarian measures, fortified by the results of preventive medicine and mental hygiene, and more so by measures of security, positive health and well-being of groups and communities, have gradually convinced social workers in the West that preventive work is far more efficient and beneficial and less costly in the long run than curative or palliative measures.

A slow and subtle but revolutionary transformation has therefore come over Western society, and it has slowly emerged from the ancient charity relief notion of social services to the more constructive and humanitarian ideal and practice, as in the realm of preventive medicine, of ensuring positive socio-economic health. So the reformatory school or borstal institution is taking the place of or supplementing the prison, the health centre replacing or supplementing the hospital. They are gradually abandoning the ancient and obsolescent practice of attempting to make the maimed, mutilated and handicapped people whole, and are following the lesson of the truly practical house-wife, i.e., of putting a stitch in time to save nine.

The West has gradually come to recognise the value of human personality and the benefits of a relatively equalitarian society, and from the old idea of *relief* of misery and suffering, it has evolved

the idea of *rehabilitation*, or the re-adjustment and re-assimilation of the handicapped man, woman or child to his family and social milieu. It is because of this State recognition of the fundamental right of every honest citizen to the decencies of life, without having to depend upon the degrading dole of personal philanthropy, institutional charity or state relief, that public assistance in Europe and America has long assumed the form of social insurance and social legislation, as witnessed in education acts, health and unemployment insurance, maternity benefits, old age and widow's pensions, orphan and children's acts, juvenile delinquency, workmen's compensation, factory acts, etc. The State which is but a concentrated and highly organised part of society with delegated powers to achieve social good, is slowly but steadily coming to recognise that its most important function is not merely to keep law and order, though in our country these are also of fundamental significance for the time being, but that it has a wider and more positive function to perform, and that is to take all steps in its power to bring about social equity and justice among its peoples and ensure all of them a decent existence.

I would not like to worry you, ladies and gentlemen, with the interesting history of relief and rehabilitation in the West, tackling the entire personality of the handicapped man, woman and child, and the central idea of their readjustment to the social milieu. It is a great step forward over the crude idea of patronage and the personal pleasure of giving alms or dole, the right of the donor to give and the obligation of the derelict to receive. It is also a great step forward from the *post-mortem* relief, permeating our entire concept of treating social maladjustments. From these negative ideas of palliative and post-mortem repair

of human derelicts, largely brought about by varied social causes, the Western world is advancing towards the positive concept of social health and social security as a necessary condition of a normal and healthy society, if every citizen is to attain a modicum of happiness to which he is entitled. That is the significance of the still-born Atlantic Charter promising an assurance of four freedoms to every citizen. It is not an imaginary concept either. Some of the smaller countries like Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Switzerland have made enviable strides in the direction of social justice and social security by their appropriate social legislation and wisely planned State social services, and Russia has been struggling hard to attain the same end in her own way, and has succeeded to a remarkable degree, even though our political prejudices may not permit us to admit it.

Our country is, unfortunately, still far away not only from the concept of social security and social justice, but even from the concept of scientific and constructive treatment of social handicaps. We are still in the age of trying to heal our festering social sores by *post-mortem* patch-work here and there. The result is that our wealth and effort seem to be largely wasted without proportionate results that accrue from a systematic handling of social ills. Only one or two examples will be enough to show what I mean. Our charity endowments in this city have been multiplying fast for the last fifty years, and yet we find that the number of our destitutes and dole recipients is steadily mounting. We have been giving alms for years and instead of such stray charity eradicating beggary, the number of our real and professional beggars has been increasing. We at one time built houses and chawls in our city, and they remained long untenanted.

We built hospitals and dispensaries but unwilling people have to be persuaded to go to them for treatment and cure. We are building more but ill equipped houses and the number of our tuberculous is growing. All these contrary, untoward and unexpected results are largely due to our not supplying the true needs of the people after a proper study of individual and social conditions, nor tackling the root causes, but due to applying incomplete or patch-work remedies in order to salve our conscience. Here then is the need of an adequate preliminary social survey, of scientific and systematic social service, and the charting of co-ordinated programmes by various social service agencies co-operating together so that our effort can bear fruit, as it should, in the progressive eradication of the causes that give rise to destitution, disease, crime and social vices.

In this co-ordinated social effort at scientifically tackling our social maladies, the State will and must play an increasingly important and forward role. If we read the signs of the times correctly, governments of the future are going to be looked upon not only as vast and powerful social welfare agencies, but they will be also judged as regards their value and usefulness by the amount of social good that they can encompass for the generality of their citizens. Their justification will be the extent of their usefulness to society, not the wilful exercise of their vast powers delegated to them for effecting social good and social justice.

In the Western countries, the increasing social legislation referred to above has had its repercussions on the educational system and the status and training of the social worker. There are courses for degrees, diplomas and certificates for theoretical and practical training in almost every Western university, and both the voluntary

and professional social workers as well as public administrators take one or the other course of training. Social work is no longer considered the perquisite or pastime of the rich and leisured class. The complex problems of the physically, economically, mentally and morally handicapped demand expert care and attention, which only trained social workers and psychiatrists can give. It is now realised that mere desire, zeal and sympathy, however exuberant and genuine, are not enough for the rehabilitation of the personality of variously handicapped but still willing, feeling and thinking human beings. Over and above the virtues of sympathy, aptitude, patience and kindness, the qualifications of tact, training, accumulated experience of case work, and a thorough understanding of the background of society and the victims of maladjustment are necessary.

To the vast problems of the relief and rehabilitation of the handicapped and mal-adjusted millions of our country, we have now added the terrifying problem of millions of refugees and evacuees uprooted from the soil, from their homes and habitats, from their avocations and set habits of life. To rehabilitate them to normalcy even as regards their bare economic sustenance is going to be a problem of the first magnitude for years. To solve their many other problems of social, psychological and cultural readjustment will be a formidable task that may defy the herculean efforts of a mighty and wealthy government. Whoever conceived this idea and however it arose under unfortunate and catastrophic circumstances, it appears, none had given much thought to the socio-psychological, vocational and economic implications, consequences and repercussions of the movement and transfer of such vast hordes of men, women and children from their traditional milieu. Those who can conceive of the

magnitude of the tasks involved in the rehabilitation of uprooted individuals and families would still hope that light may dawn on the leaders, that they may stop any further transfer or evacuation of populations, and that negotiations may be started at the highest levels to persuade at least those people, who can safely return to their original home-lands, to do so at the earliest opportunity under adequate protection from the respective governments and majority communities. This will be a less costly process both in money and in human labour and happiness. Till then, the social workers all over India and Pakistan will be put on their metal with regard to the innumerable problems of the relief and rehabilitation of our unfortunate brethren, in whose sad plight our country has suffered a tragic setback of at least one generation of human effort, which would have gone a long way towards the progress and prosperity of our countrymen at such a critical juncture in the history of our country.

The above in a nutshell is the *raison d'être* of convening this Conference as far as I am able to understand, and we are glad that governments are participating in it by sending representatives from various departments. The Government of India and the Governments of Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces, Hyderabad and others have sent delegates and we are glad to see Vice-Chancellors of Indian Universities or their accredited representatives also taking part in the Conference. It is a happy augury for our country's brighter future, which is bound to dawn, after the present troubles, tribulations and birth-pangs of a revolutionary renaissance are over, and the anti-social elements and influences that are fomenting trouble and strife to serve their own nefarious ends are found out, exposed and removed.

The organisers have, however, felt that the Conference should not be reduced to an annual venue for letting off steam by frustrated social workers, professional or otherwise, nor for providing a less innocent amusement of merely making speeches and passing resolutions. It has been felt that such a Conference should be a clearing ground for ideas, for discussing new methods of work, new technique of tackling the vast and important problems of relief as well as rehabilitation. The points of agreement and salient contributions to knowledge and thought may be put before the general body of interested social workers, before welfare agencies and organisations, before the relevant governments and the general public so that social work may be given a scientific and systematic turn and a practical bias.

This could not be done if papers were accepted for discussion at random as they came in, nor was it possible to discuss any and every topic of social work, all the many problems that beset social workers and the difficult questions of relief and rehabilitation that face welfare organisations and governments. It was, therefore, considered advisable to divide the work of the Conference into a few sections on specific subjects. Accordingly, eight Sections have been formed this year and papers invited from various persons, who are either doing actual field work therein, or are closely connected with the work relating to their sections or sub-heads. The sections which will meet from tomorrow separately in their respective rooms, are :—

1. State and Social Services,
2. Community Organisation and Rehabilitation,
3. Family and Child Welfare Services,
4. Youth Organisations,

5. Rehabilitation of the Handicapped and the Maladjusted,
6. Private Philanthropy and Social Welfare,
7. Co-operation between Social Welfare Agencies and Co-ordination of Social Work,
8. Training and Equipment of the Social Worker.

You will notice, ladies and gentlemen, that even these eight subjects are vast and cover many fields of social life, activity and endeavour. About 30 papers and 20 abstracts have been received on various subjects from students, professors, officials and field-workers. Let us hope the deliberations of the 425 delegates representing 150 societies or organisations, who have come from 38 towns and cities of India, and even from Pakistan like our worthy and distinguished President, will contribute to such knowledge and interchange of information as would lead to more efficient, enlightened, and systematised handling of the many socio-economic, medical, rehabilitational and other problems that beset our society. The reports of the deliberations will be approved at the end of the discussions, which will last a day and a half, by the respective sections, and they will then be placed for adoption before the plenary session of the Conference on the last day, i.e., Sunday, 9th November. They will then be released to the press and also handed over to the permanent body that may be formed for taking necessary action thereon, such as of bringing them to the notice of the social service organisations concerned, including governments and their welfare, labour, law, health, education and other departments for taking whatever action they deem fit under the circumstances. You may be interested to know that an official of the UNO. Information Office at Delhi, Miss Marian Dix, is also

participating in the work of the Conference, and has kindly lent films on the relief and rehabilitation work of the UNRRA, which will be shown at the University Convocation Hall on the evening of 8th November.

We are indeed very happy to relate that in the arduous task of organising a Conference of this scope in what are particularly difficult times for our country, we have received great support and encouragement from many important quarters. The Hon'ble Prime Minister, Mr. B. G. Kher, an indefatigable and sincere social worker, who carried on splendid welfare work among the poor and neglected for years before he assumed his present high office, and whose acquaintance I had the good fortune to make on the field of his social work at what was then Chamde-walaki-wadi at Bandra, and is now known as Kherwadi after him, has all along encouraged us in our work as can be seen by his presence this afternoon, and his very apposite and wise inaugural address to us. H. E. Lady Mountbatten, another welfare worker, gifted by nature and fortune, has been not only encouraging us all along in our work, but has been also giving us valuable guidance and advice, and personally interesting government departments and officials to participate in the work of the Conference. We feel very happy and deeply honoured by the presence of Their Excellencies, Sir John and Lady Colville, Lady Nye, and the Hon'ble Chief Justice, Sir Harilal Kania, in our midst. We are also grateful to the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Chagla, who in spite of his very heavy duties and responsibilities as the head of the Judiciary in the Province and the Vice-Chancellor of a large and active University, has been good enough to spare his valuable time to accept the Chairmanship of the Reception Committee. Ladies and Gentlemen, in the

midst of such help, encouragement and goodwill, social workers cannot but feel happy at the thought that they are not ploughing a lonely furrow, and that there are distinguished and highly placed persons to stand by and give them the benefit of their support and guidance.

Lastly, you will permit me to state that this has been a grand co-operative effort, and an army of social workers have been helping willingly and ungrudgingly in the work of the Conference. It will indeed be invidious to mention names, and true social workers rarely work for the sake of reward, recognition or applause. They consider their humanitarian work and the satisfaction it brings to their conscience as a sufficient reward. However, I cannot help mentioning a few names of persons, who have done so much conscientious work and given such splendid help towards organising this Conference.

As always happens in such activities, we started with great ambition and enthusiasm in our hearts and nothing in our pockets. But as is their great tradition to help all worthy causes generously, the Trustees of Sir Dorabji and Sir Ratan Tata Trusts as well as the N. M. Wadia Charities gave us a good start, and we could feel sure that at least our heavy stationery and printing bills may be paid. The persuasive and public-spirited Lady Rama Rao as Chairman, and wherever collection for a worthy cause is concerned, our hustling, hard working, and even aggressive Mrs. Bapsey Sabavala as Vice-Chairman of the Finance Sub-Committee, and our tireless social worker and popular Sheriff Mrs. Mithan Lam as Honorary Treasurer with Mrs. Shuffi Tyabji as joint colleague, got together with the help of numerous others like Mr. K. A. Abbas and the Indian People's Theatre Association to bring us the sinews of war to execute our peaceful

purpose. Finding accommodation and arranging for rations, conveyance, petrol, etc., and making scores of arrangements for the creature comforts as well as for the intellectual deliberations of the delegates, we could not have got a more efficient and conscientious organiser than Mrs. Gulestan Billimoria, who has shouldered her heavy responsibility with zeal and alacrity. Two live wires of journalism, Mr. K. A. Abbas at first and then the indefatigable Mr. Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan as Chairman of the Publicity Sub-Committee, have done more free publicity, quickly realising that our limited finances could hardly permit of payment in these times of high costs and shortage of space.

We have counted Dr. J. M. Kumarappa as our own and, in the parlance of sport, he has been fully extended, having to work as Chairman of the Organising, Steering and Working Committees. I am wondering whether he has not had to attend more meetings than myself. The students of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences have laid the foundation of their professional careers well and truly by assisting willingly in the numerous small chores incidental to organising such a Conference. I would be failing in my duty if I did not make a special mention of two of my exceedingly hard-working and yet over-worked, trusted lieutenants, if I may be so permitted to call them, Mr. M. S. Gore and Mr. B. Chatterji, who have shouldered the heavy task of the Conference and the organisation and conduct of its office so far, and have not spared themselves in any way in discharging their self-imposed responsibility conscientiously and creditably. My task would have been more difficult, nay, almost impossible, if I had not two such willing and able young colleagues. There are numerous other workers, helpers, commercial concerns, welfare agencies like the Social

Service League, the Y.M.C.A., the Trustees of the Parsi Punchayet Funds and Properties, the Hon'ble Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and the authorities of the Siddharth College, of the Thackersey Women's College, and of the Sunderabai Hall, and several others who have helped us in various ways. The list is so long that simply reading out the names would take minutes. We will acknowledge our debt to them at the proper time. They will pardon us that we cannot do so here; we assure them that it is not the flesh that is weak or the heart that is lacking but the clock which is inexorable.

We owe a word of apology to those delegates and visitors whom we could not accommodate owing to the last minute rush after we had declared that the lists were definitely closing, following upon three extensions of dates as in a public auction. We were all the time apprehensive of shortage of accommodation, and if we had gone on accepting delegates and visitors further, we would not only have overcrowded an already congested City, but seriously jeopardised the convenience of those who had enlisted well in time. We hope, therefore, this difficult position of the organisers will be appreciated by those who had to be reluctantly refused enrolment after the closing date.

To the delegates present we would only say that they would appreciate under what heavy odds we had to work. If therefore they find any defects, deficiencies or shortcomings they will overlook them with a generous heart. But we would certainly welcome constructive suggestions which we will gladly pass on to our successors, so that future Conferences, if held, as surely they will be, may improve upon the present arrangements. We finally hope you will find the Conference of some substantial help and that your deliberations will contribute to the furtherance of scientific

social work, improvement of its methods and technique, and the betterment of the lot of professional social workers; but above all that they may lead to a clearer vision of the true mission of all good social work, which is to make itself progressively

unnecessary, by and with the real rehabilitation of the handicapped individual and family into a proper social milieu, so as again to make them useful members of a healthy, vital, progressive and happy community and society.

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#### U. N. FELLOWSHIPS FOR SOCIAL WELFARE STUDIES

A group of 20 social welfare officials, representing China, Austria, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and the Philippine Republic, arrived recently in the United States to study under United Nations fellowships in social welfare. The group is part of a total of 124 from these countries and Albania, Finland, Greece, Hungary, India, Italy and Poland, to whom U. N. Fellowships have been granted. They will study current developments in the social services of the United States. Others will make similar studies in various other countries.

Upon returning to their native countries these experts will put to practical

use new methods learned in their studies in the fields of care of children and the aged, rehabilitation of the physically handicapped, the operation of social insurance systems and the administration of welfare services.

The United Nations is also assisting these governments by supplying them with technical literature and films for training purposes; by sending experts to give advice and assistance; and by holding seminars to discuss matters of interest with leaders in the welfare field. Two such seminars have already been successfully held in Latin America.

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#### EDUCATING HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

In England, all children are educated according to their ability and aptitudes, and those juveniles who suffer from some disability of body or mind have special forms of education suitable to their condition. Education from the age of five is compulsory for them as well as for other children.

Parents may provide education for backward children privately, just as they may for other children, but few of them do so because of the cost and difficulty. Backward children whose disability is serious must go to certain schools, but where the disability is slight they may attend ordinary schools where they receive special guidance. Those who attend schools

which deal only with backward children must attend until they are aged 16 years.

Different disabilities are dealt with in different ways. Owing to the success of preventive methods, blind children in England number only about two in 10,000, and they and those others with some slight vision learn through the medium of touch. Most schools for the blind are old-established and supported by charity, but where there are not enough of these, publicly provided boarding schools in the last 40 years have been set up and now there is enough room for all blind children. Blind students may enter universities or teachers' training colleges on the same basis as other people.

*Special schools.*—Although those with partial sight do not learn to read by touch, they cannot see well enough to make good progress in ordinary schools without help. About five in 10,000 go to special schools. Some attend daily at such schools near their homes in the large towns, and there are some boarding schools for those who do not live near day schools. All the schools take pupils from 5 to 16 years. The children read from books in large print, from handwritten or printed sheets, or from chalk boards. Experiments in using magnifying lenses to make ordinary books visible are proving successful. The rest of the curriculum is on normal lines.

Those who are so deaf that they have been unable to learn to speak or to acquire language naturally are taught to speak and use English. The number of school-age children thus affected is about seven in 10,000, and in the last 10 years many under five have been admitted to schools which have nursery classes. Most of the boarding schools are old charities like those for the blind, but the day schools in the large towns are publicly supported.

Partially deaf children who have enough hearing to enable them to speak naturally but are too deaf to benefit fully from ordinary schools, are in two classes. The most serious cases are admitted to schools for the deaf. The less serious may remain in their own schools if they have hearing instruments, and instruction is given in lip-reading in classes they attend once or twice a week. Provision for these children is in its infancy, but they are only about 5,000 in number, of whom about half should be in special schools. It is planned to open some boarding schools for them separately from the deaf, and to develop the technique of teaching them by amplifying their own and their teachers' voices by class hearing instruments which

have been experimented with for some years.

*Epileptic children.*—Delicate and physically backward children who cannot attend ordinary schools because they are under treatment in hospitals, or because they are crippled, or because their health would suffer, are taught in hospitals. Most hospitals which have child patients for more than three months employ teachers to teach them in bed, or while they are convalescent. In the larger towns there are day schools for crippled children who are brought to school by private bus from their homes, and in almost all towns of fair size there are open-air schools for delicate children who live at home and attend daily. There are also a few boarding schools for delicate children and incurable cripples. Some three or four children in 10,000 have education in hospitals or boarding schools for the physically backward.

Epileptic children who have severe fits, but can be educated, may attend boarding schools for epileptics, of which there are seven, with about 650 children. Children with minor or infrequent fits usually attend the ordinary schools. Children with defects of speech do not attend special schools. They receive treatment from qualified speech therapists individually or in groups at some convenient centre while they are being educated in the ordinary schools.

Maladjusted children who show psychological disturbance requiring treatment by medical or educational psychologists and investigation of their home conditions by trained social workers are estimated to be about one per cent of children, if minor difficulties are included. The great majority attend their ordinary schools while receiving periodic treatment at clinics provided by education authorities or hos-



pitals, but a few require residential care if treatment is unsatisfactory while they remain at home. For them there are a few boarding schools, at present run by voluntary bodies—in future these will be run also by local education authorities—and a rather larger number of hostels in which they can live and receive treatment while attending ordinary schools.

*Free education.*—All education in special schools, and all medical treatment carried out in backward children, is free of cost to the parents. No fees are charged even for board at residential schools. The cost falls in the first place upon the local education authority of the area in which the parents live. If the authority maintains its own special schools the cost falls upon local taxes, but a proportion of the cost, usually more than half, is repaid to the authority as a grant from the Ministry of Education out of national taxes. If the local authority does not maintain a special school of the kind appropriate for the child, they arrange to have him admitted to a special school run by another authority, or by a voluntary body, or by a hospital which will give appropriate treatment. These schools are all approved and inspected by the Ministry of Education, and a fee which may cover the cost of education, board if necessary, and treatment, is fixed by the Ministry.

Teachers in special schools must have as high qualifications as those in the ordinary schools. In addition, teachers of the blind and deaf, either before they begin to teach or during their first three years in a special school, have to pass an examination in the principles and practice of educating the blind or deaf.

Because of the medical treatment and education they receive as children, many of the delicate, physically handicapped and maladjusted pupils in special schools are

under no disability when they leave school and engage in similar occupations to those followed by children educated in ordinary schools. Some of them must necessarily have more difficulty in finding employment than normal children, and the blind require special arrangements. The Ministry of Labour and National Service takes special care to find work for those with disabilities of body or mind. Their rehabilitation officers examine the abilities of each child who requires help on leaving a special school. Certain employments are confined to the disabled, and each large employer must employ a percentage of disabled people. Other provisions are made for employment in non-commercial workshops or assistance in work at home, assistance in poverty, and pensions to blind people.

*Skilled workers.*—Blind people who have been specially taught in school up to 16 or older, and have had professional training, may be successful masseurs or masseuses, clergymen, musicians or lawyers. They can be trained to be competent shorthand-typists. Those with less intelligence may enter a large variety of skilled trades, either in special workshops for the handicapped, or in ordinary industry. Some are employed in retail trade. Deaf people enter such a wide field of employments in which they need not have frequent contacts with the public that it is difficult to give a selection, but agriculture, engineering, domestic work in hospitals and institutions, bakery, textile factories are examples. A few have been successful in journalism and accountancy.

A recent report from one boarding school for educationally subnormal children noted that one of their old boys was a leading stoker in the Royal Navy, several were in the Guards Regiments, one was a market gardener owning his own car, another was a foreman in a brickworks,

and a girl was in charge of a canteen. Several of the best London stores employ on high-class luxury work large numbers of girls who have received training in fine needlework, embroidery and dressmaking at schools for cripples. They find them cheerful and willing workers, glad to be able to earn their living on an equality with healthy women.

All these instances show that special education need not be regarded merely as a humanitarian effort to alleviate the lot of the unfortunate, but as an attempt to enrich the nation by training all of its future citizens to perform the most skilled work of which they are capable.—James Lumsden.

#### TALKING BOOKS FOR THE BLIND

The Division for the Blind of the U.S. Library of Congress is now making plans to increase its production of specially constructed phonographs to enable more of the United States' 230,000 blind persons to hear recorded readings of new and old books. A total of 27,392 blind readers have registered for the Library's free services thus far, and the division distributed about 23,000 special phonographs in the last year on a lifetime loan basis.

Recorded books are shipped by the division to 26 branches all over the United States, which have an average of 20,000 requests a year. These libraries also handle an average of 12,000 requests a year for

Braille volumes. The talking books, however, are especially popular among those who lost their sight too late in life to start learning Braille.

In addition to servicing regional libraries, the Division sends books directly to blind individuals throughout the country. Mailed at Government expense, they are delivered at the readers' door by vans which call for them in either two weeks or two months.

The heaviest crate packed for mailing contains a set of discs comprising the entire Bible, which, as a talking book, consists of 169 discs and takes 86 hours to hear.

#### REFORMING YOUNG OFFENDERS—SUCCESS OF "PROBATION SYSTEM"

Since the majority of those who become hardened offenders begin their career of crime early in life, it follows that if reform is to be attempted it had better begun when the offender is young, his character still malleable, and before criminal habits have become deeply rooted. In Britain new methods of punishment have, therefore, been applied primarily to young offenders, though by trial and error they are gradually being extended to adults.

Of these new methods, the most noteworthy is the probation system, based

on the principles: (1) That any attempt at reform is more likely to succeed if it has the consent and co-operation of the offender; (2) That deprivation of liberty is not in itself conducive to reform.

*Normal environment.*—The probation method substitutes for physical restraint "supervision in the open." So far as possible the offender remains in his normal environment, attending school or work as before, but under the care of a probation officer, whose task is to eradicate anti-social tendencies by personal influence

through friendly precept and example. Thus, the personality of the probation officer is all-important for the success of the system. He needs a strong character with more than ordinary insight into, and patience with, the frailties of human nature.

Often the first few months of probation are devoted to finding work for the probationer, encouraging him to keep it, and creating habits of cleanliness and self-respect. During this stage, it may be necessary to remove him from his normal surroundings. It may be made a condition that he lives for a time, usually six months, in a "Home" where he will receive training, or he may be sent to a hostel or to lodgings in the homes of ordinary people who desire to help in the work of reclamation.

The probation system, established in 1907 as a result of experiments begun by voluntary effort 40 years before, has been an undoubted success. There are now about 810 full-time probation officers.

*Foster homes.*—For offenders up to the age of 17 years, whose delinquency is attributable to bad homes, the method of "committal to the care of a fit person" has been devised. Here again, ordinary citizens take the offender into their home, and bring him up as "one of the family." The local authority is usually responsible for general supervision of the foster home. For young offenders whom the courts consider to need institutional training, "approved schools" are provided. These are well-equipped residential schools and in practice, most children sent to them are released on licence before the end of their period of detention. Release is usually after two to three years, the actual time depending on the progress made.

The schools make no attempt at close confinement, trusting rather to the leadership of the staff and the older child-

ren, and to "atmosphere," than to bolts, bars and high walls. Most schools use the typical British division into "houses," to promote group loyalties and healthy competition. Education is on modern lines.

There are now about 150 of these "approved schools," providing about 12,000 places, and the proportion of cases in which their training is successful is considerable, judged by the numbers who avoid conviction for further offences within the early years after their release. Welfare officers attached to the schools visit the homes of children after release and see that advice and help are available whenever they are needed.

*Borstal system.*—For older boys and girls—aged 16 to 23—in need of institutional training, the Borstal system is provided. Here again leadership and friendly competition among groups within the institution are made the basis of reformatory influence. As the inmates are older and their criminal habits more deeply rooted, discipline is stricter. Some Borstal institutions are walled buildings, from which escape is difficult, others are open camps from which the boys go out in working parties with a minimum of supervision.

After-care is in the hands of the Borstal Association, a voluntary body which receives aid from public funds. Official figures show that Borstal training is successful in about 70 per cent. of cases—a satisfactory figure in view of the fact that in the majority of cases the youngster is not sent to Borstal until after several convictions.

The next step is the extension of similar methods to older offenders, and this was foreshadowed in the Criminal Justice Bill discussed in Parliament in

1939. The Bill was postponed by the war and the work of post-war reconstruction, but it is hoped that it will soon be intro-

duced, with amendments based on experience gained in the intervening period.  
—C. J. Collinge.

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### EDUCATION BEHIND BARS—TRAINING COURSES FOR PRISONERS

The Prison Commission in London has now fully resumed the organisation of vocational instruction and training courses in Britain's prisons which, owing to the lack of staff and educational facilities, had for the most part remained in abeyance during World War II.

Adult educational and vocational courses were formed first in the prisons in 1923 with a view to checking mental deterioration among prisoners due to isolation and bad influences, and also to provide opportunities to inmates to begin their post-prison life more favourably. Before the outbreak of World War II, the staff of voluntary teachers for prisoners reached the impressive figure of 200.

*Voluntary attendance.*—The courses are held in almost all types of general instruction and training, but also include manual work such as mechanics, cobbling, leatherwork and other vocational training. Attendance, of course, is voluntary, the courses generally being held in the evenings, but experience has shown the response among prisoners to be so enthusiastic that teaching staff and space available at present are not sufficient to meet the applicants' demands. In addition to the normal courses, there are periodical lectures, debates and sometimes concerts, the use of correspondence courses is encouraged, and all British prisons are provided now with wireless sets.

These innovations are representative of an attitude towards prisoners which has been gradually gaining ground since the beginning of the century. This has trans-

formed the old-style prisons, where the inmates were condemned to the treadmill and other enforced labour, into modern institutions. These are based primarily on the findings of the Gladstone Committee's Report of 1895, which emphasised the preparation of prisoners for a return to normal life.

*More prisoners.*—Various wartime conditions have resulted in the number of persons under arrest increasing, the figures having risen between 1938 and 1945 from 10,388 to 13,180 for men and from 698 to 1,528 for women. Although these figures do not appear in any way startling in comparison with those for other countries, the increase, nevertheless, is sufficient for the problem of the education of prisoners, and their rehabilitation for their life after release to be given serious consideration.

A Bill was drafted in 1938 for the abolition of penal servitude, hard labour or prison penalties for those under 21 years of age. Although this Bill was adjourned at the outbreak of World War II, principles have been introduced in prisons in practice, tending towards the elimination of the differences between penal servitude and prison penalties.

Sentences up to two years are regarded as prison and for longer periods as penal servitude, but a convict may be housed in the same prison as an ordinary prisoner, although generally it would be preferable to accommodate long-term prisoners in separate prisons. Prisoners coming in the "star class" have more privileges and

freedom than "ordinary" prisoners and opportunities for training are made available to them by the authorities.

*Encouraging results.*—The aim in view is to prevent first offenders from attempting again to break the law. For this purpose a training centre for "star class" and young prisoners was set up at Wakefield, Yorkshire, where instruction is systematically being developed. The results were so encouraging that it was decided in 1944 to form a similar centre at Maidstone, Kent, but in this case "ordinary" prisoners are being trained. Plans are now being made to open further centres of this type, so that accommodation will be available for suitable prisoners from the whole of Britain.

The present system of working in prisons is of great importance in serving towards the resettlement of prisoners in the community, as this work is generally carried out on a communal basis and really useful activities are expected of the prisoners. The shortage of labour resulting from World War II has given prisoners the opportunity of doing skilled work for the armed forces and also led to a readjustment of former working methods.

Prisoners have handled the assembly of electrical equipment for tanks, fire extinguishers, and radio spare parts. Those specially selected were given a six months' course in mechanics under the auspices of Britain's Ministry of Labour, so that these prisoners could enter industry as skilled workers on their release. Large numbers of prisoners were made available for agricultural and forestry work, being frequently housed in camps away from the prisons.

*Enthusiastic workers.*—A remarkable example of obtaining useful work from prisoners has been reported by the Governor of Stafford Prison. After an explosion at an ammunition dump destroying 350 acres of the finest pasturage, prisoners were given the task of reclaiming the ground. The prisoners were enthusiastic about this work and by the end of the year, not only were 100 acres ready for cultivation, but many miles of hedging and ditching had been completed.

During this time some of the prisoners lived in a newly erected camp nearby, where they naturally had more freedom than is normally the case in prison. The results of these conditions were regarded by the authorities as extremely encouraging, and are mentioned in the Prison Commission's last Annual Report as a good example of the way work can serve the general interest and social readaptation of prisoners.

The prison authorities are well aware that released prisoners require the maximum possible care on their return to normal life, if they are not again to transgress. The training system in prisons would be incomplete, were it not to provide for those released. For this purpose, Prisoners' Aid Societies were set up to co-operate with the labour exchanges in finding jobs for released prisoners.

Their success has been proved by statistics regarding released prisoners' behaviour, for up to the end of 1945 approximately 90 per cent of the "star class" prisoners had not transgressed again, while the percentage for the other types remains at about half of those released.—Randolph B. Jones.

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## AMERICA'S COMMUNITY CHEST CAMPAIGN FOR 1948

Millions of people in the United States this month are wearing a tiny red feather in their hat bands or on their coat lapels to signify that they have contributed to the Community Chest Campaign in their cities.

In more than 1,000 cities of the United States, community service organizations like the Boy Scouts, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Traveller's Aid, Visiting Nurses, Salvation Army, and a multitude of other organizations have consolidated their fund-raising drives into one great annual community campaign which is known as the Community Chest Campaign.

Throughout the land, people of all religious faiths, political parties, nationalities, and racial backgrounds unite to raise £168,000,000 by voluntary subscription to carry on the work of community chest

organizations in 1948. The slogan adopted by the Community Chests of America is: "Everybody benefits, everybody gives."

All workers in the Community Chest Campaign, which began on a nationwide scale in 1921 and has increased every year, give their services without remuneration. They divide the cities into zones and "blocks" and call upon each wage-earner at his place of business and each housewife in her home for a contribution. A leading citizen in each community heads the local drive. The newspapers devote extensive space to the campaign.

A few of the services provided by the voluntary agencies include medical and hospital care; day nursing; summer camps for boys and girls; rehabilitation of the blind, the deaf, and the crippled; foster homes for children; and family guidance.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*A Plea for the Mixed Economy.*—By M. R. Masani. Bombay: The National Information and Publications, Limited. 1947. Pp. 37. As. 12/-.

The writer is well known for his capacity for forceful and interesting presentation of views. In this little brochure he pleads, as against theorists, for an economic programme of reconstruction for our country, that will not be committed to any particular school of economic thought, but will promote whatever appears best suited to the needs of our time. He recommends state enterprise as well as free private enterprise, peasant proprietorship and co-operative farming. He points out the evils of nationalisation, which is so much in favour in our country today, and believes that nationalisation should be adopted only where it cannot be avoided. He is of the opinion that it is unsuited to India under present day conditions except in a few limited fields. He is convinced that so far as the evils of private enterprise go, they can be controlled and overcome by enlightened public opinion in a democratic political order. The book will undoubtedly provoke bitter criticism from the ranks of the communists, as it challenges their pet notions. It will, however, be welcomed by most people who have socialistic leanings but at the same time care too much for the liberty of the individual to be willing to sacrifice it for a doubtful material prosperity.

Mr. Masani's thesis is in line with the policies of the present national government, and in general with public opinion in the country today. We in India do want to preserve for the individual as much freedom in economic life as we can. But we are apt to forget that if we are to give full freedom to the worker, we shall have to adopt decentralised cottage production, as advocated by Gandhiji, rather than industrialisation where the worker's scope for initiative and creativeness are reduced to the minimum. Mr. Masani, however, would no doubt prefer industrialisation. He does of course say that we must make "fullest use" of Gandhiji's contribution to economic thought in regard to decentralisation of industry and control. But he is silent as to what is to happen if large-scale factory enterprise puts an end to cottage production. Unless we are clear as to which we shall prefer in case of conflict between the two, our economic life will be without a rudder. What is worse, we shall probably drift with the times into the whirlpool of industrialisation, and vie with others for markets and the latest weapons of destruction.

The brochure is well written and provides much food for thought.

—Bharatan Kumarappa

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mittee Report, and, if so, in what way such an effort could best be attempted.

*Social insurance.*—Firstly, can anything in addition to the basic recommendations of the Bhoré Committee be attempted by the State? I think the answer to that must be no. There is one reason for this which it seems to me is insurmountable, and that is the essential poverty of the country as a whole. Unless production in India can be enormously increased it is difficult to see how any additional considerable social measures financed by the State can be attempted. It cannot be too clearly appreciated that the future of India from the aspect of social welfare is almost entirely dependent upon increase in production, and the wise distribution of the resultant wealth in such a way as will raise the general social and economic level of the masses.

From the point of view of health measures carried out entirely at the expense of public funds, it is therefore probable that anything in addition to the recommendations of the Bhoré Committee would be impossible. Are there any other methods of approach in which the State might play a part, but which would not be entirely dependent upon State funds?

*The Workmen's State Insurance Bill.*—One possible avenue is by the extension of the principle of social insurance, which may or may not be State aided. It must not be thought that the adoption of the insurance principle for the promotion of measures of social amelioration is the easy answer to all our difficulties. It must be remembered that all such measures have to be paid for in one form or other, and that the well of industry is by no means bottomless. The Government of India has already made a start on social insurance through the medium of the Workmen's State Insurance Bill which was submitted to the Legislature a year or so ago. Most of

you probably know that that Bill is an attempt to improve social conditions so far as medical care is concerned, for a very limited section of the population, namely, workers in perennial factories. The scheme, if it is ultimately passed into law, will be financed by contributions from employers and workers, supplemented by contributions from the Central and Provincial Governments. The apportionment of the contributions will be something like the following :—

Employers	...	51 per cent
Workers	...	27 „
Central Govern-		
ment	...	8 „
Provincial Govern-		
ment	...	14 „

The benefits will be free medical care to the worker (but not to his family), a cash payment in times of sickness and unfitness for work, maternity benefit for 12 weeks to women workers who are confined. In addition, the Bill proposes that the present Workmen's Compensation Act shall be supplemented by the new legislation, and that workers who sustain sickness, injury, or death, as a result of their employment shall not be compensated by individual employers as heretofore, but shall receive compensation as one of the normal benefits under the Scheme, such benefits being paid for from the common Insurance Fund.

It will be seen that here is what might be called an intermediate stage between a State service, fully financed out of public funds, and a scheme financed purely out of contributions from the individuals who would benefit from the fund. The total State contribution is naturally much less than would be the case if the Scheme were run purely from State revenues.

Here then, is a beginning. There are many possible defects which will only



become apparent when the scheme is in operation. Medical care is only provided for an absolute maximum of five months, after which the insured person is thrown back on his own resources. The cash benefit ceases after 8 weeks, even in the most favourable circumstances. The benefit is about half wages which, since wages in India are as a rule very little above the mere subsistence line, can hardly be termed adequate. All these are serious defects, and no one realises that better than those who were responsible for the drafting of the legislation. But the Scheme as a whole has one great virtue, namely, that it marks a real attempt to improve the lot of at least one group of productive workers. The number of these workers is relatively small compared with the total population of India, but is by no means negligible, amounting to well over two millions.

If the Workmen's State Insurance Scheme works, and there is no reason why it should not, the path will be much clearer for future developments, and further legislation on similar lines. So far as this particular scheme is concerned, it is possible that the actuaries who have been responsible for the actuarial side of the Bill have been overcautious in their estimates, and that at the end of say five years there will be a considerable surplus in the Insurance Fund. That is what happened with the National Health Insurance Scheme in the United Kingdom. If that should be the case, it would be possible to extend the scope of the scheme in several directions. In what direction the extension should take place remains a matter for future consideration, but possible avenues can be suggested. For example, it might be possible to include the wives and families of insured persons for free medical care. That would be a great achieve-

ment and would increase the number of beneficiaries under the Scheme at least three fold. Even if there is no surplus it would be possible to extend the scope of the Scheme to cover workers in other branches of industry. The only limit to expansion of this nature is the extent of the tax which it is possible to place upon industry, for it must be remembered that in the end the financial burden falls upon the industries whose workers are protected by the insurance scheme.

The extension of such schemes would not in any way be contrary to the spirit of the programme laid down in the Bhore Committee Report, in fact the report itself states that there is a good case for special facilities for workers in industry, in advance of the general health scheme for the community at large.

It will therefore be realised that the function of the State in social welfare schemes is by no means limited to schemes which are completely financed from revenue derived from taxation.

*Supplementing State schemes by voluntary effort.*—It remains to examine to what extent State financed, or State aided schemes, can be supplemented by voluntary effort. It is a truism that in the sphere of health, voluntary aid is as a rule much easier to obtain for some curative purpose than for the purpose of prevention. The provision of hospitals for the cure of disease provides a good example. The reason for this is deep seated in human experience. The charitably disposed person sees all round him the results of poverty and disease manifested in different forms of sickness. His highly developed social conscience impels him to do something to alleviate this distress, and to him it appears that the obvious way to relieve it is by endowing hospitals for its cure. As a rule the percep-

tion of charitably minded persons of this type does not extend far enough to see that their money would possibly be better spent in alleviating, or even attempting to alleviate, some of the social conditions which led to the ill-health of the persons they are trying to help in the first place. For example, it might well be that money spent on improving housing conditions would in the long run be of greater benefit to the community than money spent on building hospitals. From the widest aspect, therefore, it would probably be better if voluntary funds could in part be diverted to some preventive aspects of social welfare, which in the long run would prove of greater value. This envisages much closer collaboration between the various voluntary organisations dealing with social welfare, and probably the setting up of some central advisory body which could advise philanthropists on the best way of spending their money for the good of the community at large.

*Advantages of voluntary efforts.*—Voluntary effort has many potential advantages over measures controlled entirely by the State. One of the biggest advantages is that it is so much more elastic. In State controlled measures the officials concerned are very much restricted in their activities. Regulations have to be considered at every step. Officials are public servants and are liable to be called to book for every little mistake. Errors of judgment may have very harmful effects on the future of the official concerned, or even of the Service, or the Government. All this leads to lack of initiative and spontaneity in most State controlled services. The big advantage which a State service possesses is of course that it has far greater financial resources, since it has the power to call upon the public for contributions, and compel them to pay. It appears therefore that the activi-

ties of the State should primarily be directed to those aspects of social welfare for which relatively heavy capitalisation is essential, whereas voluntary effort should be mainly directed to those aspects of social welfare which do not necessarily demand heavy expenditure in terms of money. Translated to terms of practical politics this probably means that as a rule voluntary effort should be directed to supplementing State services where the latter are defective owing to the inherent defects of all State services already described.

*Co-ordination of voluntary and State effort.*—From the health standpoint what are some possible outlets for organised voluntary effort to augment State services. Shall we in the first instance examine housing. The housing of the working classes in India, particularly in and around the larger cities, is one of the worst features of the country. It is probable that no very great improvement could be brought about by voluntary effort, since the capital expenditure involved in rehousing and slum clearance schemes is much greater than could ordinarily be met by such effort. Rehousing of people living in insanitary conditions is certainly one of the most needed preventive health measures in our larger towns and cities, and one hopes that the removal of this blot will be one of the foremost aims of our new Governments.

But we must be careful not to fall into the errors which most other countries fell into in their rehousing of the working classes schemes in years gone by. Successful slum clearance involves a great deal more than the mere destruction of insanitary dwellings and their replacement by better houses. I had a very good illustration of this during a recent survey of tea plantations in India carried out for the Ministry of Labour,

On one large tea estate in Assam, I was taken by the Medical Officer to see the quarters in which the workers lived. At first sight it was difficult to make up one's mind exactly what was the position. The quarters themselves seemed excellent, but there was a general air of dilapidation about the place. I asked the Medical Officer to explain matters. He informed me that the quarters were erected in 1938, when they were the pride of the Company concerned and were regarded as a model for future developments. Each house had two large rooms, there was a paved covered verandah with facilities for cooking; each quarter had a fairly large piece of ground fenced off for growing vegetables, etc. There was a separate bore hole latrine for each house which was contained in a galvanised iron shed with a roof of the same material. The Medical Officer said that the workers had only occupied the quarters for a few months when the whole place began to go to pieces. Firstly the galvanised iron from round the bore hole latrines was torn down and used to make additions to the living quarters, although these were quite adequate in size. In very few instances were the latrines used for the purpose for which they were intended. Hardly any of the workers made any attempt to cultivate their compounds, and very soon the surrounding fence was torn down and used as firewood. Within a couple of years the whole estate had taken on the neglected, dirty, dilapidated look which it still has.

I asked the Medical Officer in what manner the workers had been transferred from their old *bashas* to their new quarters. He replied that they had merely taken a batch of workers, transferred them to the new quarters, and then destroyed the old *bashas* by fire. No attempt at all had been made to educate the people or to encourage them to take full advantage of their better

living conditions. The moral is clear. It is not the slightest use transferring people from insanitary dwellings to new and sanitary quarters and merely hoping for the best. They must be helped, advised, encouraged, and generally made to see that it is up to them to make the most of their better conditions and that if they do so they will be fully repaid by better health and happiness.

Here then is an example of what might be done to supplement State effort by voluntary effort, and I would suggest that whenever a new block of houses for the working classes is erected, the appropriate voluntary social welfare organisation be approached through the central advisory body and requested to make arrangements for voluntary workers to visit the new estate regularly and assist the people to take the fullest advantage of their new conditions. This is a type of work which can be done better by voluntary effort than by paid officials for the same reasons as I have previously mentioned.

The principle of voluntary effort to supplement State effort is probably the most satisfactory answer to other forms of social welfare. Health education of the general population is a case in point. The Bhoze Committee was of the opinion that the main responsibility for this should rest with the Health Departments of Governments, but there can be no doubt that there is a great field for voluntary effort in the education of the masses of India in the fundamental principles of healthy living particularly in rural areas. Small health exhibitions, health publications, lectures and propaganda by means of film strips, lantern slides, loud speakers, individual and personal contact are all measures which are perfectly well adapted to use by voluntary workers.

The same principle will apply though perhaps with less force, to other branches of health welfare activity, particularly in connection with infant and child welfare, child guidance, and maternal welfare. It is in these latter that India is perhaps most backward of all from the public health standpoint. Infantile, child, and maternal mortality in India is frightful, and much of it could be prevented by relatively simple measures.

What is clearly necessary is that voluntary work for social welfare should be much more completely organised, and brought under a Central Co-ordinating Committee. This Committee, in consultation with the Central and Provincial Governments, should apportion and allot various spheres of action, and define a clear field for those workers who wish to take up social welfare work.

# EDUCATION FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

MRS. WINIFRED BRYCE

Education has hitherto been concerned largely with matters extraneous to family life. With the changing situation education must concern itself with living. In the following paper, which was submitted to the All India Conference of Social Work (1947), Mrs. Bryce points out the need of integrating family life education in our college curricula and discusses the content of education for marriage and family life.

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A student who had just passed his intermediate examination, and who was very keen on further education, found himself, against his will, being married to an illiterate girl, 13 years his junior. For two years he brooded unhappily over the situation while his little wife stayed at home in her village. The husband then persuaded the family to allow him to have charge of his wife and see that she got an education. For eight years the young wife went to school and finally reached the matriculation class. In the meantime, her husband completed his M.A. in India, went abroad for three years' post-graduate study and returned to occupy a good position. With great joy he was united to his wife, and they proceeded to set up their home. She was still young, pretty and intelligent. She had received a good education in school and had a number of social advantages also. Everything seemed most promising for a happy modern home. In three months, however, the husband spoke with great sadness: "I see that there is much still to be learnt. She has had a good education from books but she does not yet know how to live."

In this true story we find the position of many thousands of educated young men and women today. They are dissatisfied with the past and its traditions. While grateful to their parents for their loving care, they are at the same time extremely rebellious of any parental authority which runs counter to the conditions of modern life and to the desire for personal freedom

which is no less strong than the desire for national freedom. Youth has eagerly sought education in school and college, but when it has been attained, and even when an adequate economic living is achieved, we still find them feeling uncertain and insecure as they face life. Undoubtedly, the weak-spot is in the homes which these young people are trying to establish. If a man has a genuine sense of stability and security in his home, it is not so difficult for him to face outward dangers and difficulties. If, however, the situation is reversed, and outward circumstances are fair enough but there is no inward security and happiness, he is not sufficiently sure of himself to be able to make a success of life.

The young man whose story I have told went to the root of the matter when he realized that his wife had had no education for living. He himself had had more, but even he was not fully prepared to meet the situation.

How did her ignorance of the right relationship in marriage show itself? By a lack of understanding that marriage was a partnership. The young wife was sufficiently a product of the past to be keen and eager about her household duties. She had greatly benefitted from her education by an improved knowledge of sanitation, hygiene and certain ideas in regard to nutrition. Her cooking was perhaps no better than that of the illiterate women of her family as far as taste and skill were concerned because experience does count in these matters. She was, however, a more intelligent

shopper. She could knit and sew. All this was to the good and to this extent her education fitted her for family life. She also had the capacity to read books and magazines that would be helpful to her, but it must be confessed she had very little interest in them. There seemed to be no incentive to learn better house-keeping by reading. The weak-spot was in not knowing how to live with her husband. He longed to have a wife who would be a partner in the fullest sense of the word and a real companion to him. When any matter had to be settled, his idea was that they should sit down and talk it over together. Sometimes after full consultation his judgment would be accepted by her, and sometimes, her judgment would seem to be better. This was not, however, comprehensible to the young wife. If she wanted anything very badly and could not easily get her husband's agreement, she fell back on the old methods of a campaign of tears, nagging, recrimination, pouting and sulking, and little tricks of intrigue. When her bewildered husband asked, "Why do you behave like this, why cannot we talk things over and decide?" her reply was: "This is the way my sisters act towards their husbands, why should I not do the same?" It seemed indeed at times as if all the dearly bought education which she had had for eight years—dearly bought because it was paid for by the patience and self-restraint of her husband had but produced a veneer.

The problem of relationships within the family and a satisfying and harmonious family life is very acute in our country at the present time. It is not, however, peculiar to India. Some years ago, a great step forward was taken in education in America, not because the educators met together and decided that certain courses should be offered to the students; nor because the public demanded that certain

subjects be taught; but by the students themselves. Perhaps, it is unique in the history of education that groups of students in various institutions should ask that a new course of instruction be added to the curriculum to meet their desire for better living.

In a men's college some of the senior students went to the Principal and said in effect: "Sir, we are grateful for the good education that we are getting here. When we leave this college, we will be equipped to earn our living and be good citizens, but there is one matter of great importance for which we have had no preparation at all during our student days. We are all interested in setting up our homes and we want to have the best homes we can. What have we learned in this college that will prepare us to do that?" The Principal of the college was deeply impressed by this criticism on the part of the students and he arranged for an extra curricular course on marriage to be given to them. Other bodies of students took up the idea and soon spread it, so that now in the United States over 400 colleges give courses on Family Life, not as optional extra curricular, take-it-as-you-please courses, but as a subject having the dignity, standing and attention that any other college subjects would have, comparable to economics, psychology or science. The latest move is to have it taught as a subject in high schools and even the lower schools (what are known in America as public schools). A large city in the Southern States has instituted in its class rooms a series of discussion periods on "How to Live with Other People" which they believe will lay a good foundation for the more advanced subject which the students may take in later life. The idea, however, is that at each stage of education the students shall have some knowledge of Family Life

which will be suited to their age, and development so that no matter at what stage a young person's education is terminated, he will have a working knowledge of what constitutes a well-integrated personality that can work co-operatively and creatively with others, more especially under the exacting and testing conditions of family life.

Naturally, such education further falls into two parts. There are first a number of what we might call technical skills which are useful and which can be learned by all. To mention only a few: elementary economics, the keeping of accounts, marketing, nutrition, planning a budget, saving through the post office or through insurance, the proper expenditure of time. These subjects can well be taught in schools. In some form may even begin in the elementary school, certainly in middle school, and to a considerable extent in high schools. The principles of health and nutrition may also begin early and continue to be developed all through the days of education in school and college. Some of these subjects demand a separate department of instruction with properly trained teachers. Where that is difficult to secure, it is possible for a great deal of Family Life Education to be imparted through the ordinary school subjects if the teachers are aware of the opportunities they have for so doing.

It is interesting to note that there is a strong desire among boys as well as girls to have the opportunity of learning home management and home life. A recent survey of a number of boys' high schools in the Madras Presidency showed that a large majority of the school students questioned had a very strong desire for such subjects to be introduced as would enable the boys to share more efficiently in the duties and management of the home.

It would not be out of place here to call attention to the fact that household science has been discredited in the minds of many people in India because it has been thought to be an easy subject for matriculation which has been prescribed for girls with two motives:—

- (1) because they are considered too feeble mentally to do mathematics,
- and (2) because any subject that promises to make men more comfortable is popular.

This subject, as it is commonly taught, is hardly worthy of the name of science. It is gaining in popularity, but there are extremely few teachers in the whole country who are able to handle it competently for sheer lack of training and adequate preparation. If this subject is not to become hopelessly discredited, it will have to be put on a sound basis and regarded as being (a) as scientific and as testing as economics, history, or any other subject on the curriculum, and (b) re-organized with Child Development as the focal point. It is possible that the opening of classes for boys in such subjects as psychology, human relationships, budgetting and cooking, which many boys would like to have, would help to call attention to this department of education and win for it greater respect and better support.

On the other hand, a number of girls have expressed a desire for instruction in subjects that have been thought to be masculine, for example, economics, dairying, horticulture and such practical knowledge as putting up a much needed shelf or a few hooks or put in a new fuse, or do other such simple repairs about the house.

The boundary line between what is man's work and woman's work is entirely broken down. In very few cases are there

any scientific grounds for these divisions other than tradition and social custom. Women have shown that they have the capacity to learn to use technical devices. They are already doing it in the field of industry where in the mills they work with machines. If our homes were similarly equipped with modern labour-saving devices, women could and would use them. The time thus saved would be spent on (a) better care of the children, (b) community service, (c) lessening the load of the woman who finds it necessary to seek gainful employment as well as keep house.

To train men and women technologically for modern standards and methods in the mechanism of house keeping is part of the preparation for marriage, which should be undertaken now-a-days.

Far more important, however, is the training in human relationships. This we may divide into two parts—(i) the sex relations of the husband and wife, and (ii) their relationship with other members of their family and household. Some years ago, a young man who had grown up in a boys' boarding school was about to be married. He went to a friend and said, "I know nothing about what women are like. I need to know more before I am married." You will find among many young men today only an elementary knowledge of what women are like physically and then often in extremely coarse terms. Unless a young man has had an exceptionally good home and wise mother, it will be very difficult for him to have the knowledge of how to take care of his wife at the time of her menses, pregnancy, lactation, and later on at her menopause. At such times, a woman needs a certain amount of consideration and understanding. A mother needs to know what is going on in her growing boy's body and mind as he approaches adolescence. She needs

to understand the strong drives which influence him as he enters manhood. She should know the problems of middle age and their adjustment which come to both her husband and herself. Without this knowledge on the part of both partners, living together may be a source of irritation instead of mutual aid and comfort.

Is it useless to urge that there should be a thorough pre-marital medical examination for both men and women? At present it is almost an insult to suggest it to some people, but it is really common sense, and might save much sorrow later on. This examination should include a blood test, again for both men and women, to make sure that there is freedom from venereal disease. Let those who are sure of a clean bill of health come forward and set an example.

Men and women need to know far more about one another's daily work. A woman, who has done at least some work outside the home either before or after the marriage, is in a position to understand better how her husband feels at the end of the day, and what his problems are in connection with his business. A woman who has earned money for herself often has a better idea of the value of money and how to spend it than a woman who has never had any financial responsibility. On the other hand, a man should know something about a woman's work in the home, what is interesting, and what is dull about it, its demands upon her, both physically in the way of endurance, and emotionally. We repeat, there can be no clear-cut division between man and woman's work in family life. Each person must have his own major responsibility, but family life is such an extremely co-operative affair that unless each person has some understanding of the other members of the family and is ready to co-operate in so



far as his circumstances will allow, it becomes tragically possible for two people to live side by side in the most intimate relationship of human life and yet remain comparative strangers with one another.

Nowhere is co-operation more needed than in the relationship of the husband and wife to other members of the family. Let each one think of the mother of the other, as mother instead of mother-in-law. So, too, with the wife's or husband's sister and other relationships. Undoubtedly, this calls for a certain degree of tolerance and sympathetic understanding, but these qualities can be developed in any one who really wishes to have them. The unfortunate thing is that many of our relationships with other people are governed by tradition. A woman may be a kind, good woman, altogether admirable as a friend and neighbour, but as soon as she becomes a mother-in-law, her nature is expected to change, and she is to be thought of as harsh and domineering. Nowhere is this change of attitude more tragically exemplified than when a step-mother has to come into the home. Any woman who is willing to marry a man who has already several children, must be a woman of unusual tolerance and kindness to be willing to undertake an additional burden, and yet that very woman, more often than not, suffers from the handicap of having relations and neighbours do their utmost to poison the minds of the children against her. Every necessary bit of discipline, every action on her part is interpreted in the most unfavourable light. Let us contrast two different reactions to the step-mother.

In the remark of an intelligent young man who was mourning the death of his sister, who had left a large family of children: "If my brother-in-law should choose to marry again, how terrible the lot

of those children would be." Since the poor man would almost be obliged to marry again if his children were to have any care at all, the listener looked up in surprise and said, "Why terrible?" and the answer was, "Of course, she would be their step-mother." In another family the mother died leaving two little boys, and after a time their father married again. The new mother so much endeared herself to the children that when they were at school, they talked about her a great deal, and one of their companions was heard to remark wistfully: "I wish I had a step-mother."

There is not a single family relationship that cannot be met in a satisfactory manner. True, it is much harder to get on with some people than others, but that is more because of their personalities than it is because of their relationship. For example, the mother and son relationship is generally considered to be one of deep satisfaction, and yet it can be one that involves great unhappiness, if the two personalities involved are not adjusted to one another.

Child development is the natural focal point of Family Life Education for many reasons. It is the point of greatest common concern, equally the responsibility of both parents. The care of the child involves a complete set of technical skills plus the most delicate adjustment of family relationships. Finally, it is through the right development of the child that the home will fulfil its function as the basic social unit and the most powerful social agency.

Children who come from homes where there is generally quarrelling and disharmony, expect quarrelling and disharmony in all the relationships of life. They are

conditioned to unsocial behaviour. Children, however, who are accustomed to harmonious relationship are prepared to work and co-operate with other people.

A fine cultured negro woman, the wife of the principal of a college, said once that those negroes who showed bitterness in their racial relationship and responded with anti-social behaviour to anti-social treatment, were almost invariably people who came from unhappy homes and, therefore, lacked the poise and security which would enable them to meet all the difficulties of life.

We can begin in the earliest days of the life of our children in home and in nursery school to build a cordial home relationship which is not only an important foundation stone in education for their future marriage and family life, but the only true solvent of the anti-social problems from which society is suffering.

The spiritual challenge of our children to provide adequate and satisfying home life and a society in which their adventurous spirits can contribute to the future is indeed a challenge that can and must be met.

# EDUCATION OF THE MENTALLY RETARDED

MISS MEHRU J. KUTAR

The educational objectives for the mentally retarded are just the same as those for the normal. In the following paper, which was submitted to the All India Conference of Social Work (1947), Miss Kutar discusses the serious and difficult problem of educating the retarded and stresses the need of special schools for rehabilitating them through proper education.

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Of all the handicaps, the mental handicap constitutes the most serious and difficult problem. Efforts have been made to alleviate the sufferings of the blind, the deaf and the other physically handicapped groups, but the mentally handicapped has not evoked the sympathy of the thoughtful and serious-minded educationalists and welfare workers.

For many centuries, attention was paid only to the blind and the deaf-mute on the one hand and the low-grade idiots on the other. No thought was given to those less grievously afflicted individuals whom, nowadays, we call mentally deficient. The nineteenth century saw the dawn of efforts made in this direction. The first person to educate a mentally retarded was Itard, a distinguished French doctor. Thirty years later, three schools were started in France. In Switzerland, Dr. Guggenbahl established the first institution for mental defectives in 1841, and his propaganda drew the attention of the whole of Europe, and institutions for mentally defectives were set up in Germany and England. Gradually it was realised that the presence of many defective and backward children was a drag upon the normal classes and they should be dealt with separately. This was the origin of special classes, the first of which was started in Germany in 1863. Since then institutions and classes multiplied rapidly in Europe and America.

What kind of children require special training? And who is a mentally defective? There are as many definitions of mentally

defectives, as there are books on psychiatry. According to Dr. Ley, "The defective is one who shows a certain amount of mental weakness, psychic instability or intellectual inability to react normally to the stimuli supplied by the ordinary educational and pedagogical environment. He is distinguished from imbeciles and idiots chiefly by his ability to maintain himself in the life of the community." Binet and Simon regard "an idiot as one who cannot communicate orally with his fellows, i.e., who can neither express his thoughts in words nor understand thoughts expressed and this solely owing to intellectual deficiency. The imbecile is one who cannot communicate in writing with his fellows that is to say who can neither express his thoughts in writing nor understand what he reads—always through purely intellectual defects. A child is feeble-minded if he can communicate orally and in writing with his fellows but displays backwardness amounting to two years under nine and three years if he is over nine so long as his backwardness is not due to lack of educational opportunity."

Out of these three main groups, the first two are not educable. Idiots require institutional care. Imbeciles are able to do simple routine jobs like sweeping, cleaning, dusting, washing, etc. The last group is educable and can be rehabilitated. They can make good social and vocational adjustment provided they are trained in special schools meant for them. To send them to ordinary schools would mean

waste of energy and effort on the part of the children and teachers; and waste of money on the part of parents. Our teachers who are blissfully unaware of the principles, methods and technology of modern education, seldom attribute their backwardness in study to defective mental development. Thus poor children become the victims of their taunting and all sorts of punishments. Parents also get fed up with such children and they are made to leave the school only to be thrown on the streets at the mercy of the exploiters. Mere backwardness in school progress is not a definite indication of mental deficiency because it may be due to physical, emotional or environmental causes. Mental retardation can be determined from the results of mental tests in terms of the intelligence quotient. Generally a child whose I.Q. falls below 70 is classed as mentally retarded.

Lack of research in the field of education has left the problem of mentally retarded out of our sight. Their problems should be studied with the following objectives in view :—

- (1) Social problems of crime, alcoholism, delinquency, illegitimacy, prostitution, unemployment and pauperism are closely connected with feeble-mindedness. To minimise these evils a scientific study of the problems becomes a necessity.
- (2) Left to themselves, the mentally retarded are drags on society. Hence their identification while they are children and their wise adjustment to the social and economic life of the community, to make them useful members of the society, is a task which requires scientific study.

- (3) To live in an atmosphere of happiness is the birthright of every child and it is more so with those whose power to create their own happiness is so limited.
- (4) To locate the causes of mental deficiency and to devise preventive and ameliorative measures.

Before definite steps could be taken for the welfare of these unfortunate victims of the cruelty of Nature, a survey should be made to find out their approximate number. Though it is not an easy job, it can be carried out with the co-operation of social workers, parents, the Government and educational institutions. Parents have to be educated to give out facts rather than to hide them so that they can get the benefits of the existing welfare facilities. It is a firm though false belief that stigma is attached to the handicapped by putting them in special institutions meant for them. Hence, parents prefer such children to be in the ordinary schools even though they cannot make any headway there. This opinion can be discouraged by propaganda and legislation. Switzerland was the first country to enact that the feeble-minded should not be neglected.

In England there are two laws: (1) Educational Act which tries to ascertain educational incapacity of the child and to provide suitable education for defectives between 7 and 16 years. The Act defines such children as those who not being imbeciles are by reason of mental defect incapable of receiving proper benefit from the ordinary schools. (2) Mental Deficiency Act which ascertains social incapacity due to imperfection of mind. Unfortunately, India knows no such Acts. It is sincerely hoped that this Conference will take up this matter

seriously. The public must learn that even the mentally defective child has a mind which can be educated, a hand which can be trained, ambitions to strive for and it is their duty to understand his limitations and to help him to make the best of himself so that he can be a social asset rather than a liability.

Only the survey of the defectives is not enough. There should be an annual census, for, by medico-psycho-pedagogical assistance their I.Q. may come up or go down due to certain causes.

Classification according to the I.Q. is the next step after the census. As mentioned above, their intelligence quotient can be approximately judged by intelligence tests. Mental retardation is of varying degrees ranging from I.Q. below 25 to 70 or 75. The general psychological classification in terms of I.Q. is as follows :—

I.Q.	
Below 25—	Idiot
25— 49—	Imbecile
50— 69—	Moron or feeble-minded
70— 79—	Borderline
80— 89 —	Dull
90—110—	Average or normal
110—119—	Superior
120—140—	Very Superior
Above 140—	Genius

Of course this classification is arbitrary and it cannot be strictly followed: the child's general behaviour and educational progress should be taken into consideration. Mental testing being a new enterprise in India, very few persons are qualified for its administration, and that also constitutes one of the handicaps for running institutions efficiently.

Coming to the educational problem, it is to be noted that it cannot be handled by mass methods. It requires intensive study

of the individual case and calls for the application of appropriate physical care and educational procedure to suit special needs. It has also to be emphasised that the mentally handicapped do not form a class by themselves. They are not different from the rest of the population except in the degree of mental development and should be treated as nearly as possible like normal human beings. The difference between the normal and the mentally retarded is one of degree than of kind. Hence their education is not different in its aims and objectives from the education of any other group of children. The aim is to teach him the art of living, to enrich his mind by using all capacities and potentialities and to help him become a useful member of the social group. This is the basic philosophy underlying every curriculum adjustment. However, the educational objectives for the mentally retarded are not so broad as those for the normal, owing to their arrested mental growth. In view of this fact, they cannot be contributory members of the society. But if they are well-adjusted, socially and economically, it would certainly contribute to social harmony and peace.

Certain fundamental principles are to be considered in their educational procedure: (1) The curriculum should be based on what the child has rather than what he has not. It has to be arranged to cater to his capacities, limitations and interests. This principle is not a special prerogative of the mentally retarded but its need cannot be over-emphasised in view of the fact that their limitations are greater, their interests less varied and less extensive than the normal children. The curriculum cannot be made rigid for the whole group. Each child is an individual case with a different degree of development, and hence it has to be elastic to suit varying needs.

(2) Their education should be concrete rather than abstract. Their intellectual faculties like memory, reasoning, imagination and association are poor, hence they are object-minded and not idea-minded. Rousseau's dictum, "Teaching consists in exercises and not precepts," has to be rigidly followed in their curriculum. (3) Maximum freedom compatible with good discipline should be allowed. These children are so suppressed at home that suppression creates more problems than mental retardation. Movement is necessary in promoting general health. It also serves as a normal stimulant for the sensory centres and for intelligence in general. Discipline will not suffer by freedom of movement provided that the teacher knows how to exert authority born of respect and affection. (4) More importance should be attached to sensory training and perceptual knowledge with the object of adding precision to knowledge, to improve, ennoble and enrich verbal expression and to create new knowledge. Their attention and power of concentration is very flighty, and they are connected with sensory conditions, that is to say, visual attention, auditory attention, and motor attention. Hence training in these senses will develop their power of concentration and attention. Often, mentally retarded are found deficient in sight, in hearing, in the sense of touch and muscular co-ordination. If these senses which are the gateways of knowledge are left untrained, there will not be much progress. The experimental researches of Fleehsig have proved that the sensory centres and the sensory perceptions are the first to develop and as they develop, the memory grows in quality and quantity, the more the eye and ear are exercised. It has been also noticed that sense training games are greatly enjoyed by the children. (5) Individualization forms the pivot of education of the mentally retarded.

Each child is an individual case and no one method can be applied to all. It has to be altered and adopted according to their individual ability. (6) Teaching should be of utilitarian character. After all, the aim of education is to make them self-supporting to a certain extent and education should be a means to that end. Manual activities rather than academic education should form the major part of their curriculum. For, it is through the simplest types of handwork like stringing beads, block building, cutting and folding paper, hammering nails, etc., that he can be taught higher levels of manual work for his earning and living. (7) Each activity should not be continued for more than 20 minutes and there should be a rest pause before another is started.

Of course, no amount of training can cure deficiency and turn a feeble-minded into a normal child, but the special schools may improve behaviour, implant decent habits and teach them elements of useful knowledge.

Their curriculum should be such as to provide for the five-fold education of the child, viz., physical, mental, social, emotional and cultural (education for work, home life and social participation). The curriculum of the special school cannot be a mere simplification of the programme of the lowest classes in the ordinary school. The very fact that they cannot get along in the ordinary schools demands a special curriculum, suited to their requirements. In curriculum adjustment, the child's mental age and I.Q. should be the guiding factors. It can cater to the needs of two groups of children, viz., pre-adolescent and adolescent.

*The pre-adolescent.*—The common practice in ordinary primary schools is to teach the child the three R's from the

very beginning. A child is not intellectually ready for instruction in reading and writing until he has a mental age of 6 years. Hence their curriculum should be based on motor and sensory training, personal hygiene, habit training, speech training and performance of simple activities. For their greatest welfare and happiness, they should be provided with an environment which is simple and understanding. The unfortunate plight of these children is that they are left in an environment which is too complicated and confusing for their limited intelligence: neither are they understood nor do they understand others. Unfair comparison and nagging implant in them feelings of discouragement, frustration, aversion, inferiority, anxiety, shyness and rebelliousness. Social adjustment in normal ordinary society is not an easy task for the mentally retarded, hence to get them acquainted with the process of such an adjustment is the fundamental task of special schools.

Following is the list of activities to make the curriculum most effective and efficient:—

- (1) *Habit training*.—This emphasises upon personal cleanliness and neatness, toilet habits, care of property, (such as crayon, paste, toys, dress, etc.), food habits, health habits, etc. It is not possible to discuss them in detail here.
- (2) *Social experiences*.—Presentation and discussion of good relationship involving father, mother, sibling, school mates, neighbours, visitors and others.
- (3) *Sense training*.—This includes recognition of name when called, matching shapes, colours and size, sound, picture completion, puzzles, observation of natural phenomena (sky, cloud,

trees, sun, moon, rain, etc.), recognition of objects by sound, smell, touch, taste, colour and so on. All these are taught in the form of games with special apparatus.

- (4) *Speech training*.—Speech is a social pass-port. As most of them have speech difficulty, emphasis should be laid upon clear enunciation, correction of baby talk, broken language, lisping, stammering and other speech defects.
- (5) *Muscular co-ordination*.—This includes rhythmic exercises, dancing, marching, outdoor games, exercises like walking on balanced rail, playing on swings, seesaws, etc.
- (6) *Nature study*.—Acquaintance with common pets, flowers, trees, seasonal weather changes. It should be based on objective training by taking them to zoo, botanical garden, etc.
- (7) *Manual training*.—Hammering nails into block of wood, carrying household articles, stringing beads, coarse needlework, knitting, weaving, basket-making, cutting paper and cloth with a pair of scissors, etc.

All these activities should be conducted in the form of varieties of games with special apparatus and can be used as the foundation for training in vocabulary, background of experience, etc.

As the child gains experience in these, he should be prepared for academic experience in reading, writing, counting, etc., according to his capacity.

*The adolescent group.*—Their curriculum should be based on the following lines:—

- (1) Participation in social and civic activities. This is most fundamental in the education of normal children also, but more so in the case of the mentally deficient, because public opinion about their future is so fatalistic that they are barred from taking interest in social life and are least encouraged to participate in it.
- (2) Manual training in shop, kitchen, laundry, sewing room, carpentry, metal work and other handicrafts, according to their interest and capacity. Neither school authorities nor parents should be over enthusiastic, about their progress. Their progress is bound to be slow. Patience and perseverance on the part of all the three parties, viz., teachers, parents and children themselves, alone can result in steady improvement.
- (3) Health and physical training.
- (4) Preparation for home-making through experiences in household budgeting, child-care, home beautification, etc.
- (5) Music, arts and crafts, etc. Mental development of the defectives is not always all round retarded. They have some specific ability in music or certain arts and crafts which, if developed, can make them self-supporting. It is the function of the psychological service of the school to find out their latent potentialities and direct the teachers accordingly. They also

constitute emotional stabilizers as children secure emotional satisfaction from them.

- (6) Reading, writing and arithmetic. Progress in these subjects is very very slow, but if taught in an attractive and interesting way with concrete objects, they do show some progress. However, these subjects should be taught only to the extent that they may be useful in their practical life.

This, in brief, is the scheme for the education of the mentally retarded, the success of which depends on the efficiency of the leadership and teachers. Teachers are the backbone of any educational institution. On their ability, sincerity, enthusiasm, initiative and efficiency depends the successful achievement of the aims and objectives of education. Mere academic qualifications are not enough. Interest and liking for teaching such children, knowledge of the method and manner of educating them, impressive, pleasant and cheerful personality, firm, friendly temperament, adequate understanding of human nature and of the special needs of the mentally retarded are essential requisites of a qualified teacher. She has to be very very patient and perseverant when a child gets into temper tantrums. Emotionally these children are immature and they cannot control their emotions. She has to study each child thoroughly, his socio-psycho-economic background, special abilities and weaknesses, and adjust her curriculum accordingly. She should have some knowledge of the nervous and mental disorders with which such children are generally afflicted. For, many cases regarded as disciplinary problems over which the teacher wears out her energy, belong to one of them. Record of each child should be kept for guidance and for the satisfaction of the



parents. Home visits should also be paid to arouse parents' interest and to gain their confidence and co-operation.

*Method of teaching.*—The teacher has to understand these children before she could teach them. For, over and above their mental defects, they have their behaviour problems. Unlike the routine programme of the ordinary schools, the time table has to be adjusted according to their daily moods. They are deficient in memory, reasoning, grasping, associating and concentrating, hence the ordinary method of teaching does not suit them. What normal children learn spontaneously, they have to be taught. Their curriculum should be based on teaching which is more concrete than abstract. The Montessori method is based more or less on this, and it can be adapted. As their memory is poor, one thing should be taught at a time and repeated constantly till they grasp it thoroughly. Their attention is flighty, so the subject should be made very lively to sustain their interest. They are open to suggestions, hence the teacher can exert her influence by gaining their confidence. They suffer from inferiority complex and, therefore, need plenty of approbation and encouragement for whatever little they achieve. The teacher's task is not only to teach them but to educate the parents as well. It is often noticed that they are either over protected or neglected, but are never understood and given opportunities for normal development. Much can be done in this respect through parent-teacher co-operation.

*Advantages of a special school.*—The child has an opportunity to learn all he is capable of, which is denied to him in an ordinary school.

The child feels happy in an environment where he is understood.

Being usefully and agreeably occupied, the child is prevented from developing undesirable habits and from delinquency.

The school has to look to their medical problems too. Their mental handicap is more often than not accompanied by physical unfitness. After-effects of diseases like typhoid, small-pox, meningitis, that are responsible for causing mental retardation, constitute real medical and psychic problems. Glandular disturbances create more problems than mental deficiency and they should be attended to promptly. The school should have a Medical Board of efficient doctors, psychiatrists and neurologists who have specialised in these problems.

In India, the educational system being highly mediocre and defective, no attention is paid to the education of the mentally retarded. In advanced countries, States themselves take the responsibility of their education as they believe that "civilization will march forward not only on the feet of healthy children but beside them, shoulder to shoulder, must go those others—those children we have called the handicapped: the lame, the blind, the deaf and those sick in body and mind. All these children are ready to be enlisted in this moving army, ready to make their contribution to human progress to bring what they have of intelligence, of capacity, and of spiritual beauty." India needs many special schools to prevent the colossal waste of human energy and manpower. A special course for the training of teachers should be introduced in our Universities. The sight of such children thronging the streets and foot-paths of India, pilfering, begging, drinking and visiting houses of ill-fame and their exploitation are a silent but grave commentary on the inefficiency, ignorance, indifference and inadequacy of our educational system and on the pathological

condition of our society itself. Nature is cruel to them but why should society be equally cruel by utterly neglecting them. Out of thousands of doctors in India, not a single one has specialised in their problems. India has very few psychologists and psychiatrists, out of whom only a small number take interest in them. Out of hundreds of welfare agencies—both private and public—not a single one cares for their welfare. There is not a single piece of social legislation for the benefit of these neglected children.

Government is spending crores of rupees on the education of normal children,

and a few more crores spent on providing special education for the mentally retarded would amply repay them. It is truly said, "If society does not keep mentally deficient children busy in a constructive way during the whole of their school lives they, in a destructive way, will keep society busy during their adult lives." With the exception of one or two private efforts of educating them, the vast sub-continent of India is blissfully ignorant of the special methods of education. Let us hope that this Conference would take up the matter seriously and sponsor this new venture for the uplift of these unfortunate creatures of God.

# SERF LABOUR AMONG THE ABORIGINALS

K. G. SIVASWAMY

\* The aboriginal tribes are one of the vulnerable fronts which supply exploited labour for vested interests in rural areas. In the following paper, which was submitted to the All India Conference of Social Work (1947), Mr. Sivaswamy narrates the forms of agricultural servitude among aboriginals in India and suggests certain ameliorative measures.

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By serf labour is meant labour tied almost permanently to an employer not only by legal contract but by compulsion of economic circumstances and the low standard of life, the social necessities and unpreparedness of the aboriginals to resist the inroads of the modern free competitive life. It has taken many forms in different parts of India according to the economic needs of the aboriginals. Its degree of intensity varies in inverse proportion to the earning capacity of the aboriginals and their innate strength for resisting exploitation in all forms.

*Debt and serfdom.*—In certain areas of the Central Provinces the aboriginal occupancy tenant whose land cannot be alienated according to the Tenancy Act pays a low rent for land and makes a surplus income. But yet he sweats and serves continuously for moneylenders. This happens particularly in Zamindari areas of Raipur district where the aboriginal is tempted to borrow by non-agricultural moneylenders as Marvaris, Kachis, Brahmins, Sikhs and Muslims.<sup>1</sup> These moneylenders choose prosperous tracts. "They set up in a village with a stock of clothes, bangles, trumpery, jewellery, sweets (especially gur). They encourage the aboriginals to buy on credit. Thereafter, cash and grain loans begin." It is the high interest for small loans, the fictitious accounts, and the cheap price for which the produce is mulcted by the moneylender that are the cause of perpetual debt. The small loan in a

year accumulates like a snowball which being irrepayable ties the tenant to the moneylender. The tenant hands over the produce year after year, thus transforming himself into a labourer and collects lac and tendu from the forest for him. Two features are noteworthy in this form of moneylending. The moneylender wants the produce but not the land. The need for loans is little but yet a heavy debt accumulates.

*Credit needs and serfdom.*—Yet another form of exploitation arises out of the need for loans for seeds, hire of bullocks and maintenance. This happens in the Chanda area in Central Provinces and among the Maria Gonds of Bastar. 25 per cent is the *sawai* grain interest and in case of default it is 50 per cent. A borrower pays endlessly, hands over part of his produce and some even supply free a bullock and a cow to a moneylender. For the Gond the writing off of a debt or its closure is unimaginable. In the villages of Maria Gonds where primitive conditions prevail, the method of exploitation is extremely crude and childish. The Teli moneylender lends bullocks on hire and also barter cloth, salt, tobacco and liquor for grains. The following are examples of cases that came before the Debt Conciliation Board in 1936. A Maria Gond hired a bullock in 1920 for two *gidha* of *dhan*. He went on paying Rs. 5/- a year in grain for 12 years. When the account was examined in 1932 he owed 140 *khandi* of *dhan* (Rs. 700/-). Interest

<sup>1</sup> Grigson W. V. *The Aboriginal Problem of Central Provinces and Berar*. p. 192.

was calculated at 50 per cent compound per annum. The claim in 1936 was for 464 *khandi* of *dhan* or Rs. 2,320/- for hire of a single bullock. In another case a Teli lent 8 *gidha* of *dhan* or Rs. 16/- in 1911. He admitted having received 270 *gidha* and two bullocks, i.e., Rs. 600/-. He still claimed in 1936, 130 *gidha* or Rs. 260/- worth *dhan*. The chairman of this Conciliation Board reported that claims valued at Rs. 2,33,300/- were reduced with the consent of the creditors to Rs. 7,286/- or 3 per cent. It is noteworthy that hundreds of debtors sent petitions to this board not to interfere with their transactions as otherwise they might not get future credit. One of the main causes to which indebtedness is attributed is the prohibition of aborigines from their normal fugitive cultivation in forest areas. This, it is said, necessitated *Khawai* (maintenance or feeding) loans during the period of cultivation at the foot of the hills. Possibly absence of moneylenders made the aborigines to manage with grain and natural products in the earlier period while their advent into their areas made it easy for them to borrow grain. Whatever be the reason for the growth of debt in aboriginal areas, the fact remains that want of cheap credit for agricultural purposes is the main cause of this form of exploitation by moneylenders. The Maria Gonds of Bastar have devised a method in some villages of preventing individual indebtedness. The usurious interest rates levied by the Teli money lender are paid by the community and the debt is cleared in one or two years. This is an example of how public spirited aboriginal leadership can protect the community from the evil effects of exploitation by non-aborigines.

*Farm wage and serfdom.*—The most common form of exploitation that arises in agriculture is in respect of farm labour which sweats for bare food. So long

as lands are cultivated by aborigines with the aid of family labour and exchange labour and such lands cannot be alienated in law, so long as there are more lands and less population, the problem of tied labour on the farm does not arise. This does not necessarily mean that, where lands belong to aborigines and every aborigine gets a sufficient share of land, perfect freedom and equality reign among them. Tribal leadership equally dominates and the ignorant aborigine willingly acquiesces in all forms of forced labour for his leaders out of fear of the outside world. But with the increase in aboriginal population, subdivision of holdings and sale of holdings, the landless aborigine class has increased. The serfdom under which this class suffers materially differs from that of the tribal society. It is devoid of human touch and the resignation born of frustration and helplessness symbolises its features.

Agriculture under small holders with its natural risks of failure, its short-term character as a provider of employment, the long period needed for yielding return, the needs of equipment and raw materials, and of transport to markets, and the consequent credit needs for maintenance, and agricultural requisites, and the need of employment in the off-seasons has not only not given a steady and decent wage even to the tenant and labourers in the plains but has resulted in conditions bordering on serfdom. Still less can we therefore expect it to create a different set of results among the more backward and less calculating aborigines. To this should be added the institution of superior holders of lands super-imposed on the cultivators by the East India Company for facilitating the easy collection of land tax. The system of land tenure introduced by the British administration brought in its wake non-

aboriginal superior holders of land as Malguzars in the Central Provinces, the Jenmis of Malabar, the Vysia, Oria and Kamma landholders in the Vizag and Ganjam agencies, and the Zamindars and their agents in Zamindari areas, who were more interested in collecting rents, or cultivating their lands with the aid of cheap labour. So long as the law was satisfied, they were in no way troubled by moral or humanitarian considerations in their dealings with the aboriginals. The legal evasions and subterfuges they devised to get aboriginal lands, the nefarious tricks they practised in their lending business and the violence they used for recoveries of loans hardly affected them. Greed and rapacity held a greater sway over their minds. They hardly felt their degradation. Such a depraved condition among the landholders was equally due to the want of resistance among the aboriginals to the dishonourable practices. Here was a class of people who had no ambition for a higher standard of life, who never dreamt of protection against future insecurities in life, who could live on grain and roots in the forest when unemployed, who claimed no time free as their own for their private enjoyment, but the time limit for whose labour was set only by their own physical exhaustion, who did not consider it degrading to live on any cooked food or remnants of food supplied by their masters, and who had no self-respecting ideas of maintaining their wives and children at home but willingly permitted them to work on a pittance for their masters. If only we put all these conditions together, namely, under-capitalised farming, a rapacious and greedy class of landowners, and a class of unresisting aboriginals in low life, we can easily picture the resulting situation.

Aboriginal labour was available in the year 1942 for two meals a day, clothing

and a blanket and an annual cash salary of Rs. 30/- to Rs. 50/- in many parts of the Central Provinces and Berar. Sometimes the payment was in grain in proportion to the yield which made it not only varying from crop to crop but also facilitated fabrication of accounts by the landholders. The Barsaliya in the Chindwara district is a permanent farm servant who goes on working perpetually for the Malguzar for the advance loan of Rs. 50/- taken by him, on a remuneration of Rs. 30/- to Rs. 40/- a year and two meals a day. In Melghat Taluq, Berar, the Korku boys and girls, and men and women engage themselves on contract for several years. The system goes by the name of Bhagia. In the villages of Harda Tahsil, Central Provinces, and along the Narbada, Korkus work as Bannihar (worker for daily wages), as Harvaha (3 or 6 months) and as Barsi for one year. The Bannihar gets about three seers of paddy or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  seers of wheat as daily wage. The Harvaha gets his food, and in addition a small area for raising paddy which is an inferior land. He gets also seeds about 15 seers and the bullocks of his landholder for cultivating this plot. The value of the yield in money from this land may be estimated as Rs. 1-4-0 per month in 1940. The value of the daily food supplied in that year was about one anna a day. When a Harvaha goes for outside work the employer pockets his wages. Where he is paid in cash in addition to food, but not in grain, he gets Rs. 35/- to Rs. 40/- per annum. Half of this cash he may get in advance. Sometimes he pays interest for this advance at half anna per rupee per month. The Barsi engaged for the year gets 30 pai of Jowari for every 15 days whose annual value in 1940 was Rs. 50/-. This is sufficient for his food, while his old debt remains unpaid. When there is no work, the Barsudia is dismissed or not paid anything till the next working season.

The landless aboriginals have been absorbed in permanent farm service in different parts of the country on more or less similar conditions. The Paniyans of Malabar, the Yenadis of Nellore, the Khonds of Ganjam and Orissa, the Santhals and Kols of Bahdrak and Balasore divisions in Orissa, and the Chenchus and the Hill Reddis of Hyderabad, the Oraons of Chota Nagpur and the Bhils of Khandesh are examples of farm servants tied for years to their masters and rendering all kinds of labour at home and in the farm in consideration for the small permanent advance they receive, and the grain wage or cooked food they get for their bare maintenance during days of work.

*Bond service.*—Another phase of farm service with many features of serfdom is what goes by the name of bond service. Bond service is a consequence of social necessity, and the defects of the agricultural occupation. The aboriginal is a victim in this service to many unconscionable practices on the part of the moneylender and the landowner owing to his ignorance on the one side and the recognition of a *laissez-faire* economy on the other side by the State. According to this mode of service the labourer pledges his labour for a definite period on a certain cash and grain wage in return for an advance loan. Mortgaging one's own property which is the physical body of the labourer in this case is nothing unmoral if the terms were fair and honourable. It is the unconscionable practice in this service that makes it despicable and not the principle of pledging one's service as a consideration for an advance sum.

Bond service does not exist everywhere. Wherein an area owing to want of demand for labour and supply of credit on fair terms, an aboriginal becomes inevitably tied to the farm of a landholder, and is

further bound by debts in cash and grain, and where he is not mobile enough to migrate and not sensible enough to repudiate ancestral debts, where he lives in the house-site of his master, and is satisfied with the cooked food supplied twice in his house or the fluctuating grain wage, no further bond orally or in writing is necessary in the case of this aboriginal to make him a serf of his landholder. He is already one, and until these conditions are solved, he is bound to remain a serf. But in certain areas of Madras, Bihar, Hyderabad and the Central Provinces, agreements are drawn up which go by several names as *Gothi*, *Kamia*, *Bhagela* and *Kat*, and stipulate the remuneration, the period and certain other obnoxious and revolting conditions of service. Bond service does not flourish where the aboriginal has more avenues of employment as in big cities or mining centres. It does not flourish too on *Ryotwari* areas where there is more demand for field labour. Where the forest department is able to provide work in the off-season as in Melghat taluq of Berar, the period of bond service is short. It exists more in the *Malguzari* areas of the Central Provinces such as the *Satpuras*. In certain areas of Saugor district, Central Provinces, it prevails more among the Banya moneylenders than among the *Malguzars*. It certainly does not exist in villages of aboriginal *Malguzars*. In the Central Provinces it exists mainly in villages of Hindu and Muslim *Malguzars* where the aboriginal has little to pledge except his own labour. In the Central Provinces, it is less prevalent in the Marathi districts but exists more in the northern Hindi-speaking districts.

The chief cause of bond service in the Central Provinces is the high price for brides which an aboriginal has to pay. The father-in-law cannot forego it as he has to repay his debts to his moneylender.

by this method. He should also recompense where the bride elopes and the husband has to find another loan as price for the second bride. These loans range between Rs. 50/- and Rs. 100/-. The period of service ranges between one and twelve years. Seed loans and grain advances for maintenance are the second cause of bonded service. The marriage loan increases in size with the addition of these loans. There are again days of no work during which grain loans are taken from the employer. Some aboriginals take loans for purchase of bullocks or purchase of a piece of land. Other reasons for loans are the payment of the caste penalty, or a criminal court fee, or the performance of a funeral rite, or a *puja* to prevent illness. It is interesting to note that a Gond in Morsi Taluq of Berar entered into a bonded service in order to repay a sum of Rs. 30/- in 13 years which was ordered to be paid by the Debt Conciliation Board.

An examination of these bonds will indicate how cleverly they provide by their terms for the perpetual serfdom of the aboriginal as a bonded slave. Some of them should surely be considered generous when compared with the exacting terms in certain others. A Brahmin cultivator lends a rupee and gets work for ten days. Another landowner supplies six rupees worth of grain and some cash and wants the aboriginal to work for 5 months at Rs. 4/- a month. Another borrows Rs. 60/- and works for two years for an annual salary of Rs. 60/- and two meals. The salary is adjusted to the debt during this period. But often a marriage loan of Rs. 40/- becomes Rs. 50/- or Rs. 60/- at the commencement owing to the addition of 25 or 50 per cent interest. To this will be added the grain advance for which another 50 per cent grain interest will be charged till the next harvest. But the annual cash salary of the

aboriginal which amounts generally to about Rs. 30/- to Rs. 40/- in addition to food will not be paid in full but deductions, working to a rate of 3 to 8 annas a day as stipulated in the bond, and sometimes for even four months' absence at this rate will be made, thus practically cutting the salary to about a half. Some bonds stipulate unpaid extra work for three months in case of absence. These bonds are equally the cause of civil suits and in the year 1940 a moneylender claimed Rs. 10/- for his original loan and another sum of Rs. 20/- as damage for 40 days absence, in the Civil Court at Nimar. The defendant admitted the claim but the court however decreed Rs. 10/- at twelve per cent interest. Another bond stipulates for the crop and two heads of cattle in addition to the service of the aboriginal and his son in consideration for a loan of Rs. 50/-.

Bonds in Bhandara district indicate the lengths to which a moneylender landholder goes in extorting cheap service from the aboriginals. In return for a marriage loan of Rs. 30/- the bride and bridegroom should work 'for all hours and any hour of the day and without negligence' and on pain of paying double the sum of the marriage loan of Rs. 30/- in case of default. They will be paid Rs. 3/- a month of which a sum of Rs. 2/- will be debited to their loan. Mr. Grigson refers to the threatening stipulations in certain bonds as the following in the district of Nagpur: "The servant undertakes to suffer whatever punishment responsible government officers may impose if he breaks the agreement." Any extra wages of these bonded servants earned in work such as house building are also pocketed by the employer. In Mandla district some landholders get any small piece of land possessed by the aboriginal labourers transferred to them as sub-tenants and such lands will hardly be returned by them.

Bonded service does not mean assured labour. In the off-seasons the labourer has to fend for himself. Bonded service runs from father to son as the loan in many cases can never be repaid. Sometimes the servant is transferred to another landholder who pays the loan to the prior landholder. There can be no more telling example of forced labour in this service than the reference to "Nardhu brothers" by Mr. Grigson in his enquiry report about the Central Provinces who brought back Girdhu who ran away from service more than thrice and compelled him to put his thumb impression to bonds and false receipts and forced him to continue as their servant.<sup>2</sup> Some bonded servants in Melghat Taluq help the Banya landholders in their illegal activities. As aboriginals alone can buy lands sold in court auctions, these landholders call on their servants to make bogus bids in their names on promising to remit two or three years' bonded service. The main attractions for the landholder in getting bonded service are that he gets an "usurious interest", can so fake the grain and cash account as to fix an irredeemable debt on the labourer, and more than all, cheap labour for all time willing to work for a wage in the shape of food grains or their equivalent cooked food just necessary for the survival of the human body.

*Favourable conditions for serfdom.*—How is it that the aboriginal does not rebel under these circumstances? His own ignorance is the first reason. He is gullible. He cannot count more than twenty. He cannot understand accounts. When he can cut grass, earn five annas, and buy a piece of *gur* for two pice in the evening, he wants the *gur* in the morning in consideration for the grass he promises to give free to the Banya moneylender in the evening!

He cannot wait. He is afraid of civil courts and never dreams of liquidating his debts by declaring himself an insolvent. He was a slave to his leaders in the tribal organisation. He has changed his slavery from them to the landholders and moneylenders, who are more clever, greedy, and exacting. Secondly, the *Malguzar* himself in the Central Provinces is not only powerful by his land status but is also a semi-official. He has his official duties in addition to collection of rent and grazing dues. He can impound the cattle. As he has passed no receipts for recoveries he can get court decrees for his claims on the basis of his faked accounts. With the aid of the subordinate police he may institute false cases of theft in criminal courts. Though illegal he cuts timber from the tenant's holdings. He can get decrees for grazing dues. When necessary he sets *goondas* too on the simple aboriginal to commit acts of violence. Thirdly, the machinery of the Government is inaccessible and ill-suited in its modes of administration to the aboriginal state of society. The police stations are at long distances. The offences are not cognisable. Though the Children's Pledging of Labour Act was enacted in 1933 by the Government of India, it had failed to stop this practice. Such practices could stop only when a special police are charged with this duty, and the offence is made cognisable. The civil law decrees money suits according to the oral or written bond. The subordinate staff which deal with an aboriginal are not everywhere seekers after local injustices and oppressions, for redressing them, but are indifferent, and certainly not above corruption and in whom the aboriginal has little confidence. These then are the sanctions on which the present system of sweated serf labour in agriculture rests, the ignorance of the aboriginal, the power of the village landholder, and the inacces-



sibility, indifference and sometimes corruption of the subordinate officers.

**Quislings.**—Bonded service and compulsory renewal of fabricated debts are made possible owing to the existence of quislings among the aboriginals. The indebted aboriginals who are obliged to their landholders, are packed into a *panchayat* who generally give decisions in favour of the latter as against their community men. It is with their help that bonds are renewed, thumb-impressions are taken for faked accounts, and bonded service is approved. The Census Report of Hyderabad refers to the serfdom of hill Reddis under timber merchants. The hill Reddi was ever afraid of these merchants, as the grain and cash wage due to them for deliveries of bamboo and timber was not wholly paid. Certain Reddis acted as quislings in exacting work from their own community. "Some Reddis found it opportune to subscribe to the cause of their oppressors and these quislings became the merchants' agents and informers within their own tribesmen by secret reports to their employers. Backed by the merchants these men though more feared than respected by other Reddis became the real power in village life and often entirely eclipsed the authority of the hereditary headman."

**Forced labour.**—Forced levies and unpaid services take various forms in aboriginal areas. Here is a sample of the treatment meted out to Gond cultivators in the district of Adilabad in Hyderabad State. "Gonds of six villages complained in October 1942 that the Chaukidar of Khamana collected besides the plough tax (a tax equivalent to land revenue) an annual *mamul* of Rs. 4/- per plough and moreover 8 seers of jowari, 1½ seers of chillies, and 1½ seers of cotton per plough and at sowing time he asks an additional seer...For the

permission to build a house he asks Rs. 15/- to Rs. 60/- and when he catches a Gond with an axe he demands a fine of Rs. 2/- and one fowl and in case of non-payment confiscates the axe. The Gonds for the last 3 years have been forced to work ten days in every year in teak plantations and to bring with them their own ploughs and bullocks. They have never yet received any payment for the work but were forcibly recruited by the Chaukidar."<sup>3</sup> The same writer refers to heavy rack-rent amounting to ten times the land revenue being collected by landholders from aboriginal tenants as Gonds who unable to pay it flee to the interior and cultivate the hill slopes.

Mr. A. V. Thakkar refers, in his *Report of Partially Excluded Areas in Orissa*, to the forced labour exacted by Government in the place of taxes from the Khonds. The Khonds maintain roads, construct and repair houses, and carry personal luggage of touring officers on a wage in no way commensurate to the work done. There are again a number of customary payments in grain to landholders by these tribes, which are the most vexatious and harassing. In Santal Parganas and Singbhum, aboriginals are asked to maintain roads and buildings by their labour and are released from the obligation of paying local taxes.

Mr. Grigson refers to the following levies in Mandla district in the Central Provinces by non-aboriginal Malguzars on aboriginal tenants and labourers. 'Five days' labour is exacted in Dindori Tahsil from each aboriginal for ploughing, sowing, reaping, thrashing and bringing grass for thatching roofs. A sum of Re. 1/- is collected by Hindu landholders as *Tila* on Holi or Diwali. Tenants should supply free food articles, firewood and labour for transport of the luggage to Malguzars and their agents. A poll tax of Rs. 2/- per head is

<sup>3</sup> Haimendorf, C. V. F., *Tribal Hyderabad*. 1945.

collected from landless labourers, though this is an illegal levy under Section 74 of the Central Provinces Tenancy Act. Grazing fees are collected from tenants though illegal. The tenants also attend to monsoon repairs of the house of the landholders. The Malguzars or their agents take free supplies from their tenants and labourers of food, firewood and labour for carrying goods during their tours. Though forced labour is an offence under Section 88(A) of the Tenancy Act, the law has proved useless in stopping it as the offence is not a cognisable offence by the police. In the Central Provinces in Mandla district the aboriginals have to do certain compulsory labour for the forest department. Their complaint is not about the wage of three annas a day for road making but about the delay caused in reaping their own crops and the consequent loss from wild animals and rats, by their being compelled to do road making at the same time by the forest officers.

The following extract from Mr. D. Symington's report (1940) about the prevalence of forced labour in the aboriginal tracts of the Bombay Province is revealing: "All jungle tract tenants are liable to be called upon to work for their landlords. This forced labour is demanded for as many days as are necessary for the landlords' requirements. If they refuse or procrastinate, they are liable to assault or beatings. I was told on creditable authority of men being tied up to posts and whipped. There are also rumours of men in the past having been killed. The maximum remuneration of forced labour is one anna per diem. More often rice is given, barely sufficient for one man for one meal. If the landlord is also a forest contractor, he will use his tenants' labour by Veth (right for unpaid labour) for working his coupes. Landlords will not scruple to use their power in fulfilment of their purposes;

for instance the use of their tenants' women folk for the gratification of their lust."

*Serfdom under contractors and officials.*—Serf labour exists to a greater degree in forest villages than in the plains. Contractors in the Central Provinces give advances of money to the aboriginals on condition that a specified quantity of *harra* is collected within three months in default of which double the quantity should be supplied. They commandeer ghee, mustard and oil seeds at a low price. Aboriginals are forced to lease lac trees for 5 or 10 years for nominal amounts, while really they have no rights of subletting. The contractors compel the supply of *harra* and *tendu* leaves from the holdings of the aboriginals which too is illegal. Also no aboriginal is allowed to sell his own *harra* except through a contractor.

Contractors of forest produce arrogate the same status to themselves as those of Government officers and landholders and claim the unpaid labour of aboriginals for gathering minor produce. In certain areas of the state of Hyderabad, the aboriginals shun the contractor of minor produce not because he restricts its supply to them but because he exploits the contract for collecting various fees and dues from them for the use of fruits of trees, of *mabu* flowers, grass, etc.

Some of the contractors combine the functions of shopkeepers in certain centres and in return for spices, clothes, metal and glass ornaments collect bamboo, honey, ragi, etc., charging dear for the former and paying nominally for the latter. If the shopkeeper is also a Kalar, he supplies them drink in return for forest produce.

Contractors of labour in the Central Provinces cheat the aboriginals more in

private forests than in departmental forests. "Short measurement and short payment for imaginary defects are two of the common methods." In carting contracts the aboriginal is cheated of his wage as cart-driver.

Forced labour and supplies are more common in the Malguzari forest villages of the Central Provinces than in the Zamindari where the exercise of such rights has been stopped by the Government.

Some of the subordinate forest officers in certain regions abuse their powers by collecting *mamuls*. They have the right to collect fees for cutting wood, timber and bamboos. They regulate cultivation and the exercise of forest concessions by the tribes. On all these occasions they collect grains, oilseeds, pulses, cotton as *mamuls* and obtain also personal services either free, or paid for at nominal rates. On tours they collect eggs and chickens for a nominal price. It also happens that severe punishments are given for forest offences as theft of trees or crops. Mr. Grigson refers to the infliction of a heavy fine of Rs. 309/- on the Gonds of a village which amounted between Rs. 35/- and Rs. 50/- per head and practically required the sale of the entire property of the villagers for paying it.

*Ameliorative measures.*—This narrative of the forms of agricultural servitude among aboriginals in India should not be taken to mean that they exist among all of them and in all the areas. They are breaking down in proportion to the mass and individual awakening among them, the impact of civilising influences as industrial employment, communications, and emigration, and the spread of education and social reform. Various Provincial Governments and States are tackling the problems through legislation, administrative drive,

and larger budget expenditure. Legislation controlling money land rents, and sale of lands to non-aboriginals has been undertaken in many areas. The co-operative method has been used to a greater degree than before. Special protection has been offered in the forests to agriculturists and aboriginals as against merchants and contractors. Certain concessions regarding the free use of forest produce for domestic and agricultural purposes have been granted to them. Experience has shown that controls against vested interests are hardly of little use, so much so Mr. W. V. Grigson proposes the abolition of Malguzari landholders in aboriginal areas. The co-operative method spoonfed by officers is a misnomer among socially backward communities. The line of approach lies in the initiation of State services similar to the Farm Security Administration in the United States of America.

*Political domination of vested interests.*—The outlook of the society at large should change towards these problems. The aboriginals are suspicious of the middle class. It will take years for their suspicions about the higher classes to vanish. Many belonging to the class of exploiting landholders, moneylenders, contractors and traders are in power in all local bodies, and government service. Public opinion hardly expresses itself against the anti-social crimes of these persons. Writing about the Malguzar in the Central Provinces, Mr. Grigson says that "the real tyrant is the Malguzar of one or more scattered villages and he by his political and other influences seems largely to have escaped attention." The test of a new State and a new order of society, whether it really tackles the abolition of agricultural servitudes, lies in the number of State prosecutions of exploiting landholders and merchants, and the number of fines and arrests made from these classes.

*Estimated population under conditions of serfdom.*—We will conclude this note with an estimate of the extent of population affected by agricultural servitudes in various forms. The aboriginal tribes are greater in population in Bihar (5 millions), Central Provinces and Berar (3 millions), Assam (2.4 millions), Orissa (1.7 millions), Bengal (1.9 millions) and Bombay (1.6 millions). Among the States there are more than a million both in the Chattisgarh States Agency, and the Baroda and Gujarat States. Even though not all suffer under serfdom, the aboriginal tribes are one of the vulnerable fronts which supply exploited labour for the vested interests in rural areas. Their total population amount to 25 millions. Out of this, the population needing concentrated blasting of their various servitudes by devoted social servants, and extensive and intensive State planning will not be less than half or 12 millions, i.e., about 3 percent of the total population of India.

# MEDICAL SOCIAL WORK

J. M. KUMARAPPA

The broader concept of social welfare underlying the amalgamation of medical aid with other social reconstruction measures and the paramount need for an understanding of the social component of illness are well demonstrated by the activities of the medical social worker. Her major function has always been the study and treatment of social problems which illness creates for the individual and the family. As an important link between the hospital and the home, she is in a position to make medical and social care of patients a continuous whole. In the following article,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Kumarappa explains the importance of this new trend in hospital treatment and pleads for the establishment of social service departments in all our major hospitals.

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It is a truth acknowledged for a long time past that medical relief often fails in its purpose without social relief. As a result we find medicine always making some effort to acquire an understanding of the social situation of patients. But medical social work, as a recognised speciality, came into existence only about 1905, when social workers were added to the staff of some of the outstanding hospitals in the United States. Such a move took place because of the conviction that social factors are significant for an understanding and treatment of health problems. The work of the "lady almoners" in English hospitals and of visiting nurses connected with American hospitals and dispensaries strengthened the belief that a minimum of social study is an essential part of the adequate care of every patient. The almoners collected information from the patient, his family and outside agencies, instructed the patient in carrying out the doctor's recommendations and referred his case to appropriate sources for assistance if he needed financial help to take full advantage of the treatment.

Similarly, visiting nurses drew the attention of the American hospital authorities to the need for trained workers to help patients to carry through a tedious medical plan.

Gradually, the belief that sound medical practice does not depend on any

one phase of diagnosis gained strength and led to the movement for including social work in the medical curriculum so as to give students a better idea of the vital relationship between disease and social maladjustment. Medical students were assigned as friendly visitors to families in order to help them in terms of the patient as an entire person, instead of attaching importance only to specific diseases. They sometimes continued their contact throughout the training period contributing something genuinely significant to the medical care of particular patients.

The complexity of modern society has made it difficult for the physician to secure the patient's social, economic and environmental history. But appropriate treatment of the individual as a whole person should seek to assemble and evaluate all information that can contribute to a better understanding of the patient's condition. Many factors, however, made this requirement increasingly difficult to satisfy. One among them was the unfortunate drift away from the family physician who has always been more or less familiar with the patient as a person. He required no one to bring information on the personality and domestic problems affecting the patient's health and to interpret to the patient his own health problems. There was no need for an intermediary to impart to the patient such knowledge and under-

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<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from Bombay Chronicle Weekly, November 2, 1947.

standing helpful to urge the continuation of treatment.

Another important factor was the increased use of hospitals in which the patients were treated away from their home environment and care of relatives. The modern hospital situated in an urban area is a highly departmentalised institution where the physician is often burdened with the urgent necessity of examining many times the number of patients to whom he can do justice. Very few physicians on a hospital staff have the necessary time or skill to study the general health problem of the patient.

It is worth noting that as the field of medicine itself assumed a complex structure, specialization in a particular area of medicine became more desirable. Owing to this tendency, diagnosis and treatment now frequently involve many processes which have become functions of different specialists. In some patients, this process creates mental and emotional stresses which interfere with accurate diagnosis and treatment. Effective treatment and satisfactory recovery in the case of these patients require an adjustment of mental and emotional problems as much as the relief of the physical manifestations of disease.

It has also become difficult for physicians to secure a complete understanding of those social factors which cannot be discovered by physical examination and laboratory methods. With the advance of medical science we find the search for the physical cause of the disease through examination of the patient and laboratory findings assuming such great importance that social, economic, and environmental signs and symptoms are overlooked. This situation brought to light the need for a

person to make a fuller social examination, to function as a liaison officer between the hospital on the one hand and the patient, his home and community on the other.

Finally, there is also a growing need to follow discharged patients to their homes. It is not enough to provide the sick with the best possible treatment at the hospital and then discharge them without plans for any follow up scheme for their benefit. Some discharged patients, moreover, need help in making adjustments to their homes and work. Only a trained person, well-acquainted with the community, can afford help in the integration of its social and health resources in order to meet these associated problems. Such an individual can also be useful in the arrangements for the careful planning of convalescent care and initiation of preventive measures. These and other factors have given rise to the new type of service known as medical or hospital social service.

The medical social worker occupies a strategic position. She can establish and maintain smooth working relationships because, through training and experience, she is familiar not only with social work but also with the special fields of health and medical practice. It is obvious however, that to focus on the social area and bring to the physician all social data potentially significant for an understanding of the sick person and to discover his special needs that have developed because of his illness or his social or psychological situation, great skill and discipline are required.

Interpreting the social situation of the patient to the physician, insuring the effectiveness of medical care by assisting the patient in carrying out treatment measures, aiding the prevention of disease by educating the patient to safeguard his

strength, all these are highly technical jobs which if handled injudiciously may lead to lack of confidence in the physician and increased costs of medical care.

Although both the physician and the medical social worker deal with the ill person, each must acquire a separate body of knowledge and skill in order to become effective partners in the programme of treatment. Professional education for medical social work should provide maturity of judgment based on broad education, a body of specialised knowledge covering social welfare and medical information in its social implications, skill in working with people derived through the study of human nature and supervised practice in social case work and growth in professional responsibility. Such a programme of education would require as a basis, work in a college up to the graduate level and, later, preparation in a school of social work for a minimum period of two years.

A student entering a school of social work to become a medical social worker must acquire knowledge of the dynamics of individual, group and community behaviour, familiarity with the environmental maladjustments which can contribute to medical diagnosis and the social organisations established to meet these problems. The incorporation of the scientific point of view in social diagnosis necessitates the study of social work process through class room instruction and field work practice in social agencies. While studying she draws upon the knowledge contributed by the allied fields of medicine, psychiatry, and sociology as well as of social work.

Specialisation in medical social work begins at a later stage in the period devoted to professional education, when her studies focus upon the ill person and the practice of

social work in a hospital setting. The new skill she acquires during the period of specialisation is the process of helping the ill person overcome social and emotional obstacles in the way of recovery. An appreciation of the intensive training of the medical social worker will remove all doubts regarding her ability to understand the inter-relationships of the social situation and the medical condition of individuals and families.

Training and experience have made the social worker aware of the danger of decisions being taken by non-medical personnel. Therefore, she does not carry on her work independently of the physician. For her, medical care embodies the idea of team work where many specialists co-operate under the leadership of the physician to help the patient. Usually, her assistance is sought by the physician only when he sees some need for her services. In one sense her work is to facilitate the proper functioning of the hospital and to enable the patients to make good use of the services the hospital offers.

Health problems of patients are treated more effectively when she functions in continuous association with the physician as a member of the medical team. In fact, the medical social worker is the ideal person to give a fair and patient hearing to the patient, to establish a sympathetic understanding and to secure clues to other sources of information helpful to a deeper insight into the difficulties of his situation and their solution.

This speciality in social work is a new one in India and is now being developed on the special recommendation of the Bhore Health Survey and Development Committee. As a result of the realisation of the importance of knowing and dealing

with the patient as a social being, three hospitals in the city of Bombay are implementing the recommendations of the Bhore Committee, by developing social service departments.

As there is a growing demand for trained personnel, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences is now offering specialised instruction in medical social work. The Institute is also co-operating with the Bombay hospitals in setting up social service departments. Miss Lois Blakey, the American Visiting Professor of Medical Social Work at the Institute has been appointed by the Government of Bombay as Honorary Supervisor of the Social Service Departments in these hospitals.

The future holds rich promise for increased effectiveness on the part of both medicine and social work. Modern medicine sees the social worker as one who can contribute substantially to a total study of the individual, to a complete diagnosis, and as an important specialist in the patient's care. The continued dependence on medical social workers in the United States, where this type of service has been in existence for the past few decades, is striking evidence of its usefulness. With the growing appreciation of the need of such service and its efficacy, it should not be difficult to provide means for establishing social service departments in all our major hospitals to enhance the effectiveness of medical treatment.



## NOTES AND NEWS

### A FIVE-FOLD CODE FOR HUMAN MANAGEMENT

An enormous responsibility devolves upon management today: that of advancing our knowledge of what human co-operation demands, so as to make our maximum contribution to the world social problem. We have been organising the production of goods and services for 200 years very successfully, measured in terms of production, but in human terms with lamentable failure. It looks as if the degree of co-operation, pride in work, and absolute happiness arising out of the association of human beings in industry, is less today than it has ever been. People have more material possessions, but less psychological satisfaction from their work.

To remedy these defects in our organisations, I would like to deal in turn with five different aspects of organisation, and bring out a number of basic principles which I feel are intimately connected with them.

(a) *Outline Organisation.*—1. There shall be one chief executive in every organisation responsible for carrying out the policy of the controlling body, and he must have complete authority to take action to implement such policy.

2. The responsibility of each executive shall be explained in general terms to every member of the organisation.

3. The span of control of a Line Executive shall be limited to the number of people with whom he can maintain frequent contact and amongst whom he can maintain co-operation.

4. The functional authority of all those with specialised functions shall be clearly explained to everyone in the organisation.

5. Specialists or functional executives shall, within their own province, have the right to prescribe to line executives on methods and techniques, with the right of appeal to their common superior in cases of disagreement or failure to implement their recommendations.

6. No man shall be executively responsible to more than one person.

7. No man shall give orders except to his immediate subordinates.

(b) *Manning.*—1. The executive shall have the final say in the composition of his immediate team of subordinates, so long as his choice does not affect company policy in other respects.

2. The above selection shall be made with the greatest care and by the use of the most scientific methods available.

3. Vacancies which constitute promotion shall be advertised within the organisation and filled from within it as far as possible.

4. The excellence of a man's performance in his job or the absence of a suitable replacement shall not prevent promotion of a man to a job for which he is suitable.

5. Selection procedures should be such that employees are placed in jobs for which they are best suited mentally and physically, as far as possible practically.

6. Every executive shall draw up, at least once a year, a report on all those immediately responsible to him, and this report shall be discussed with the personnel department.

7. Executives not to have the power

of dismissal (on the score of unsuitability, not misbehaviour) from the firm, but only from the team; personnel department to try to find alternative suitable employment within the firm.

8. Employees generally, through their elected representatives, to have the right to make recommendations regarding promotion of people within the organisation.

(c) *Aspects of Organisation.*—1. So long as shareholders receive a reasonable return on their investment, the surplus revenue of the organisation shall be spent only in:

- (i) Research and development.
- (ii) Improvement of working conditions.
- (iii) Improvement in equipment and in manufacturing and administrative methods.
- (iv) Raising of wages and salaries.
- (v) Lowering the price and/or rising the quality of the product.

2. The efficiency of management shall be judged not only by the profit made, but also by:

- (i) Output per man-hour compared with other similar firms.
- (ii) Comparing theoretical potential output with that actually achieved.
- (iii) Comparing labour turnover with that of other similar firms.

2a. The financial result of changes in methods which increase efficiency or output shall redound to the credit of the organisation as a whole and not peculiarly to the devisers or operators of the improved methods.

3. Comparisons of standard with actual costs shall be available to all executives whose sphere of responsibility is large

enough to warrant its treatment as an accounting centre.

4. Wages and salaries to be calculated in accordance with job evaluation and merit marking principles.

5. Every employee shall have the right to examine the calculations forming the basis of output standards.

(d) *Industrial Justice.*—1. Every employee shall have a clear right of appeal to successive stages of higher executive authority, up to the chief executive, with precautions to prevent victimisation.

2. There shall be an appeal tribunal composed of one management and one employee representative and an impartial chairman: the majority vote of the tribunal shall be final.

3. When an appeal is made, both appellant and the person against whose judgment the appeal is made shall be present; the decision shall be given in the presence of both.

4. If an executive has to make an unfavourable report about one of his subordinates to his own superior, the subordinate shall be informed of the criticism.

5. An executive shall not make personal criticism of a subordinate in the presence of others.

(e) *Consultation.*—1. Each primary working group shall elect a representative to a secondary group of representatives and so on up the scale as far as warranted by the size of the organisation.

2. All members of the organisation or part thereof concerned shall have the right to attend as spectators formal meetings between the management and these advisory bodies.

3. Management shall use these bodies as consultants in the making of their plans.

4. Management shall keep these bodies fully informed of the present position and future plans of the organisation, and all relevant facts shall be given them.

5. The advisory bodies shall be encouraged to present their criticisms and suggestions.

6. Advisory bodies whose advice is rejected shall have the right to bring

up the same subject at a meeting at the next higher level.

7. Executives, when giving instructions or announcing decisions, shall give their reasons as far as possible.

8. Subject to the over-riding authority of a higher executive, nothing in the foregoing shall prevent the executive making final decisions on all matters within his responsibility. —By W. B. D. BROWN. *Personnel Management and Welfare*. December, 1947. p. 261.

### AMERICAN LABOUR EXPLAINED

The student of world affairs, looking at the labour scene in the United States for the first time, would find many things that would astonish him. For instance:

There is no large political labour party.

Most American labour aims to bargain with capitalism rather than do away with it.

Labour organizations are not an integral part of the government, as in Fascist countries.

There are 15,000,000 union members today, according to a U.S. Labour Department tabulation of union-membership statements. The largest union group is the American Federation of Labour, which reports a *per capita* membership in excess of 7,500,000. The Congress of Industrial Organizations reports it has about 6,000,000 members. Other unions, called "independent" or "unaffiliated" are estimated to have 1,750,000 members.

Union organization has greatly improved the status of the worker. The average work-week in 1880 was 63 hours; in 1900 it was 56 hours. Today the average work-week is 40 hours, with overtime premium pay for hours over this figure. Factory workers' average weekly take-home pay has

increased. In 1939 the average was \$23.77; in February, 1947, the average was \$46.08. This increase represents a substantial gain over the rise in the cost of living. In addition to these advances, workers are provided vacations, sick leave, and job security with provisions against arbitrary lay-offs.

The first labour organizations were not favoured by the public or by the courts. However, later unions such as the American Federation of Labour, founded in 1881, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations, organized in 1935, grew to be dominant unions in the United States. The AFL organized labour on a craft basis, a union being composed entirely of wage earners engaged in a particular trade. The CIO organized all of the workers in a particular industry.

*Union weapons.*—The unions used as their weapons to get power the closed shop, the union shop, the jurisdictional strike, the boycott, and general strike. The closed shop makes union membership a condition of employment; the union shop requires workers to join a union after they are hired. In cases of a dispute between two unions as to which one should do the

collective bargaining, a jurisdictional strike is called. The boycott is an attempt on the part of the labour unions to force an employer to agree to their terms by refusing to buy or use his goods if he fails to yield. Sometimes they try still further by boycotting firms which have dealings with him. In extreme cases, a strike is called and the employees leave their work and refuse to return until their demands have been met.

The Wagner Labour Relations Act, passed by Congress in 1935, furnished the impetus for the rapid growth of these labour organizations. In six years, union membership trebled. The Wagner Act gave workers the legal right to join labour unions and to bargain collectively. The Federal Labour Relations Board was established to settle questions about the methods to prevent unfair labour practice in plants and to arrange for elections to determine what union in an industrial plant should be the one to represent the workers. The Wagner Labour Relations Act brought the union into a favoured position and caused its rapid growth of power.

During the war years, the National War Labour Board was established to halt the vicious cycle of rising prices and rising wages. The Board found that prices had advanced fifteen per cent by May, 1942, and declared workers eligible for a similar wage raise. Later, wages were officially held to the September 15, 1942, level. As a wartime measure, the labour unions agreed not to strike and largely limited their wage demands within the bounds of the nation's economic stabilization programme.

The first attempt to change the United States labour laws since the Wagner Act came in 1946, following a large number of industrial strikes called at the end of the war. John L. Lewis, of the United Mine Workers, called a coal strike which

threatened to paralyse large portions of American industry. There were strikes in the steel, automobile, and telephone industries. As a result of these large-scale stoppages, public attention was focussed on the importance of strike-avoidance measures. The first legislative attempt was the Case Bill, passed by Congress, but vetoed by President Truman. The veto was not overridden by Congress (a two-thirds majority is required for this).

*Closed shop outlawed.*—On June 23, 1947, United States entered upon a new phase in labour-management relations. On that day, after intense debate and a presidential veto, Congress overrode the veto and enacted into law the "Labour-Management Relations Act of 1947," also called the Taft-Hartley Act, after its sponsors.

This Act is aimed at regulating the position of unions. It outlaws the closed shop, jurisdictional strikes and secondary boycotts; restricts the union shop, prohibits unfair labour practices by the unions as well as by management, makes unions responsible for breach of contract, and tends to limit union political activity.

Under the Act, unions must register with the expanded National Labour Relations Board or lose the benefits of most of its services, such as protection against unfair employers' practices. Unions must provide information regarding the compensation, etc., of the three principal officers, on dues, the way officers are chosen, strikes are authorized, money is collected and spent.

Regarding politics, unions are forbidden to make contributions in any national election. Moreover, no union may operate under the Act unless each officer files an affidavit stating that he is not a member of the Communist Party and does not advocate violent overthrow of the Government.

The strike regulations require a sixty-day notice between union and employer before seeking to end or change a contract. During this period a newly created Federal Mediation Service is called in. National strikes which threaten the national welfare can be put down by the United States Attorney General by injunction, for eighty days. If the dispute is not settled within this time the strike can be resumed legally. In that case, Congress would be given a full report and possibly recommend legislation.

The National Labour Relations Board has been enlarged to a five-man panel. This Board acts as a labour court while the administrative work passes to a new General Counsel, appointed by the President and approved by the Senate. He decides what labour cases are to be prosecuted.

The Taft-Hartley Act must be tested by experience. Labour developments will be watched by a special committee set up by Congress in the realization that only practice can determine the Act's effectiveness.

## TRAINING OF JUVENILES FOR INDUSTRY.

### (A "Special Aptitude" Scheme)

The Ministry of Labour and National Service has introduced a scheme whereby boys and girls possessing talents for skilled crafts for which no training facilities are available within reach of their homes may be given grants to enable them to take up training with employers in other areas.

The scheme provides for the payment of initial expenses by way of travelling allowances and settling-in grants, and of a weekly maintenance allowance so calculated as to provide for the cost of board and lodgings, mid-day meals, laundry and fares between lodgings and work place if not otherwise paid and if the distance is over two miles, with a balance for pocket money varying according to age. Contributions towards the cost of weekly maintenance allowance will be sought from the employer and, according to family income and liabilities, may be required from the parent or guardian.

*Origin and purpose of the scheme.*—The scheme has been adopted after consultation with the National Juvenile Employment Council set up by the Minister of Labour and National Service early this year,

comprising representatives of local education authorities, teachers, employers and workpeople.

It is based on a recommendation made by the Committee on the Juvenile Employment Service over which Sir Godfrey Ince presided, and is also in conformity with a recommendation made to the Minister of Labour and National Service by the Joint Consultative Committee, representing the British Employers' Confederation and the Trades Union Congress.

Both of these Committees called attention to the fact that, while scholarships are provided to enable boys and girls to obtain higher education with a view to entering the professions, there is no corresponding provision for a gifted boy or girl to receive financial assistance in training away from home for a skilled craft or trade.

If a boy obviously suitable by educational capacity and personal qualities to learn a skilled craft is living with his parents in a district where there is no possibility of training in that craft, and his parents cannot afford to maintain him away from home, there is a double loss; first to the

individual, who is deprived of the possibility of pursuing an occupation for which he is clearly fitted, and, second, to the national economy, which cannot afford to waste his potential skill, especially at a time when, owing to the fall in the birthrate and the raising of the school-leaving age, industry is calling for more young entrants for skilled occupations.

It is to meet such cases that the "Special Interim Scheme" now announced has been brought into operation, pending the possible establishment of a permanent scheme.

*Scope and eligibility.*—The scheme will not apply to training for careers of a professional nature. It is confined to training for a skilled craft or trade for which a recognised period and degree of training is required, and in which there are good prospects.

It will not cover employment in respect of which an apprenticeship premium is required, or one where board or lodgings are provided as part of the conditions of employment.

It will not apply (subject to special consideration in exceptional cases) to boys and girls who by choice or necessity have already taken employment away from home.

In the main, the juveniles who may be eligible to come within the scope of the scheme will be those who

- (a) have not yet entered employment; or
- (b) have had some employment but have become unemployed; or
- (c) are engaged in "non-progressive," employment; i.e., employment of the "blind alley" or "dead end" type.

*Procedure.*—Within the field described, consideration will be given to applicants

for assistance who have a clearly marked aptitude for a skilled job. Local Juvenile Employment Officers of the Ministry of Labour and National Service will look out for such boys and girls at their interviews with school-leavers or others seeking employment, and school-teachers may bring suitable pupils to the notice of these Officers. In assessing "marked aptitude" account will be taken of all available information about the applicant, including school reports and any progress already made in employment or continuation classes. The Juvenile Employment Officer will also be able to receive advice from a representative of the local Juvenile Employment Committee, who will be present at the initial interview with the applicant and his parent or guardian.

The selection of suitable openings and conclusion of arrangements with the prospective employers will be made by the Regional Officers of the Ministry. The applicant will then be interviewed again by the local Juvenile Employment Officer and, if the opening offered is accepted, the date for taking up work will be fixed. Arrangements will be made for the reception, lodging and welfare of the boy or girl, and periodical reports will be obtained from the employer on his or her regularity of attendance at work and progress in employment. The continuance of the weekly maintenance allowance will be subject to the satisfactory character of these reports.

Juvenile Employment Officers and Committees will keep in close touch with juveniles assisted under the scheme, and will do whatever they can to help them to overcome any strangeness they may feel at work or in their lodgings.

*Allowances payable.*—(1) Free fare and travelling allowance for the first journey to the town of employment;

(2) Weekly maintenance allowance which, with the juvenile's weekly wage, plus any contribution made by the employer, plus any contribution made by the parent, will cover board and lodging, midday meals (where not included in board and lodging), and laundry, and will leave a pocket money balance, 9s. a week for a boy or girl of 15, 12s. at 16, and 16s. at 17. It is contemplated that in most cases the young worker will be self-supporting at the age of 18.

(3) Fares between lodgings and place of work if the distance is more than two miles, unless the cost of this daily travelling or free transport is provided by the employer.

(4) Settling-in grant of 10s.

(5) Sickness or incapacity allowances.

(6) For holiday visits to home, where the return fare is over 7s. 6d., two railway warrants a year at a cost of 7s. 6d. each to the boy to cover the whole journey.

*Parent's and employer's contributions.*—If the parent's income before deduction of Income Tax is not more than £600 a year, no contribution towards the maintenance allowance will be required. In other cases, a contribution will be expected.

The employer will be invited to make a contribution towards the maintenance allowance—not less, it is suggested, than one-fourth of the total after deduction of the parent's contribution. This, however, is not an indispensable condition of the grant.—*Education*, September 26, 1947.

## PHENOMENAL PROGRESS OF HEALTH INSURANCE IN UNITED STATES

One American in three has enrolled in some kind of plan to prepay the cost of unexpected accidents or illness, according to a recent survey conducted for the National Industrial Conference Board—a non-partisan, cooperative fact-finding body composed of 3,000 companies, trade associations, labour unions, and other organizations. The number who have enrolled is 45,500,000 persons. The figure tripled since 1940, and is still growing. The largest plan, the Blue Cross group sponsored by hospitals, has mushroomed from fewer than a 1,000,000 members 10 years ago to more than 23,000,000 at last count.

Other health prepayment plans in the United States include :

1. *Employee Mutual-Benefit Association.*—Originating in the 1880s, they generally provide weekly cash payments for disability. Members total 1,500,000.

2. *Trade Union Plans.*—Sixty American Federation of Labour and independent unions have benefit plans covering 1,500,000 persons.

3. *Group Insurance.*—Sold by insurance companies to cover employees of individual companies and paid for by employees or employers or both. Originating in 1920, about 6,000,000 persons are now covered by policies providing weekly benefits, 8,000,000 by hospital expense policies, and 5,500,000 by surgical expense policies.

4. *Prepayment Medical Care Plans.*—These plans date back 50 years, and several different kinds have been developed in recent years. Some provide constant prepaid medical care, others surgical expense, some operate in connection with Blue Cross hospitalization. Altogether, 10,000,000 persons are covered.

5. *Individual Health and Accident Insurance Policies.*—About 6,000,000 persons are covered by these policies.

The Survey notes that the American public's participation in medical prepay-

ment plans is progressing at a rapid rate and that "the greatest potential growth appears to lie with those (plans) which are head-quartered in industry, sponsored by medical societies, or administered by the private clinic."

## SPEECH DEFECTS IN THE YOUNG

### ("Peep Show" Device for Auditory Diagnosis)

In the diagnosis of most human ailments it is normal for the investigator to begin by hearing what the patient himself has to say about his disability. Young children, however, whose speech mechanisms have never properly developed, intrinsically deny him this means of approach. Diagnosis has, therefore, to be made without the aid of conversation.

Speech defects in young children may be due to motor abnormalities, mental deficiency or to the fact that the child's hearing is too defective for it to have learned a language by the normal processes of imitation. In the latter case, the difficulty has always been to obtain an accurate assessment of the disability at the earliest possible moment, so that any special education—for example, lip-reading—may be arranged without delay.

Recently, however, two workers at the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases in London—Dr. C. S. Hallpike and Dr. M. R. Dix—demonstrated at the Acoustics Group of the Physical Society a most ingenious and extremely simple device which eliminates the disadvantages of the existing test methods. This is now employed in a procedure which provides accurate measurements of the hearing capacity in the course of a single attendance at hospital, without recourse being had to speech at all.

*Speech sounds.*—The hearing capacity of a subject is conventionally shown on an audiogram—a chart that expresses graphically the extent to which he can hear the sounds of ordinary conversation—the hearing loss, in decibels, being plotted against the range of frequencies necessary for the understanding of speech, the most important part of which is between 1,000 and 2,000 cycles per second. The speech sounds of normal conversation within this range at three feet are about 60 decibels above the normal threshold. If a subject has a 40 decibel loss of hearing at these frequencies, the 20 decibel margin required for easy understanding is partially absent; with a loss of 80 decibels or more he is, of course, entirely without serviceable hearing.

The method adopted by Dr. Hallpike and Miss Dix for obtaining figures to complete the children's audiograms is called the "Peep Show." It requires an instructor to direct the activities of the child, and a tester to observe it and to manipulate the apparatus. So far as the child is concerned, the apparatus is, in fact, a peep show—a simple box with a viewing hatch through which an entertaining picture can be seen when illuminated. In front of the box, above the viewing hatch, is a small aperture through which an eight-volt electric bulb (the "signal lamp") can be seen. Above this,



and unseen by the child, is a loud-speaker.

The tester's part of the apparatus consists basically of a pure tone generator and attenuator, together with a mains transformer by means of all of which he can originate synchronised impulses of sound (through the loudspeaker) and of light (through the signal lamp).

*Vital role.*—The instructor's role is a vital one. She first wins the confidence of the child, and then leads it to a chair opposite the viewing hatch of the peep show, herself sitting on another chair beside it. She attracts the child's attention by pointing to the signal lamp and, as soon as this has been achieved, the tester turns on synchronised impulses of light and sound which are emitted by the lamp and the loudspeaker. The frequency of the initial audible signal is 1,024 cycles per second, about 80 decibels above the normal threshold.

Now, in front of the peep show is a large bell-push which, if pressed while the signal is being given, illuminates a picture inside. It does not operate, however, when there is no signal. As soon, therefore, as the auditory and visual signal starts, the instructor leans across in front of the child and very ostentatiously presses this bell-push, whereupon the picture becomes visible to the child.

When the child has had time to assimilate this, the tester discontinues the signal and the light inside the box automatically goes out and the picture disappears. The instructor then leans back and indicates to the child that the bell-push no longer works.

*Child's reaction.*—The tester then repeats the auditory and visual signal, the

instructor pointing out a flashing bulb to the child and again making great business of pressing the switch and illuminating the picture. This procedure is continued until the child itself learns that the only time when the pressing switch will cause the appearance of the picture is when the signal lamp is flashing. Soon, it will probably not wait for the instructor to press the switch, but will do so itself as soon as it sees the signal. At this point the auditory tests can begin.

The appropriate time to press the switch is associated in the child's mind with the two signals—auditory and visual—and it follows that when one of them is withdrawn the other will continue to act. The visual signal then is withdrawn by the instructor covering it with a shutter, and the procedure begins again, but with the auditory signal alone. In the case of a child with a hearing loss of less than 80 decibels, the response to the signal will be unchanged and it will press the switch. The tester then proceeds to repeat the signal, but with rapidly decreasing intensities of sound until it is observed at which intensity the child fails to respond. The procedure is then gone through again for five different frequencies.

The equipment is calibrated in decibels above the normal threshold. The readings for each frequency can, therefore, be entered straight on to the audiogram in terms of decibels of hearing loss. The whole series of tests is over in a matter of 10 to 15 minutes, and then it will be clear at once in what respects the child's hearing is impaired. As soon as the diagnosis has been stated, the child is ready to be treated or specially educated as recommended by the doctor.

—By Ian Cox

## CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK

More than 10,000 children and many adults attended the recent Boys and Girls Book Fair held at the American Museum of Natural History as the culmination of Children's Book Week observances in New York City. Book Week is observed annually throughout the United States to dramatize the wealth of fine books available for young people.

This Fair was the first such event to be staged in the nation and the display of 150,000 original illustrations and 5,000 books marked the first time that such a collection was available. The books, which contained a sample of almost every type of children's book in print, were grouped under 10 classifications which ranged from "Just Fun" through natural and physical sciences to "America Today" and "One World."

In addition to giving the children free

access to their favourite story characters, the Fair presented many well-known authors and illustrators to entertain with puppet and magic shows, stories and chalk talks. As a permanent contribution to the building of children's libraries, sponsors of the Book Fair (the Museum of Natural History, the Children's Book Council and the New York Times) made available a specially selected list of 250 titles chosen as being of basic importance.

Books on display at the fair were donated by publisher-members of the Book Council to the Save the Children Federation for distribution to schools sponsored by the Federation.

Another special project of Book Week was the Treasure Chest U.S.A. campaign to interest groups and individuals in helping to build and expand libraries for children in isolated rural areas.

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 PSYCHOLOGY IN MEDICAL EDUCATION

An important event in the professional life of every medical man, if not the most important event, is his dealing with patients in the first months of general practice. It is the first test of the young practitioner; it is also of course a test of his professional education. This article will discuss some of the difficulties, and the reasons for the difficulties, in the transition from student to practitioner, with special reference to the acquisition of professional skill in and understanding of the relation of a sick person to his medical adviser.

*Changes in medical education.*—There are two ways in which a doctor can get instruction. He can be taken by his teacher into the patient's environment and be told there what factors have led to the ailment,

what difficulties lie in the way of the remedy, and what chances there are, all things taken into consideration, of recovery. The teacher and his pupil make an entry into the patient's life, they enter his region of "social space" and do what they can to bring some easement within it. The apprenticeship was an example of this kind of medical education. The second, the more modern way, is different: the patient is drawn into a region where he is isolated from usual social contacts and interests, and is examined by a number of hospital departments which have specialized on one or other aspect of the mechanism of his body or mind. The criterion on which the laboratory departments report is basically a statistical one: the findings lie within the normal limits for the age group of the patient examined.

Contrasting these two generalized methods of instruction and calling the former "individual or apprenticeship" and the latter "statistical or hospital" we can see advantages and disadvantages in each. When there is but one instructor, usually unsupported by the large and complicated apparatus of a hospital organization, the latest discoveries in physiology and pathology are apt to suffer some neglect: there is pressure exerted on both teacher and pupil by the environment of the home to consider before all things the present emergency, including the social and financial strain of having a sick member on their hands. The patient is seen in the world in which he lives. Under such conditions it is admittedly not easy to examine in detail the workings of his various organs, but it is difficult not to see the way his life is tied in bonds of affection and dislike, in aspiration and despair, to his relatives and the social group of which he is a member. The apprentice to the general practitioner penetrated into the home and stood both to gain and to lose by that medical relationship.

A patient sent to hospital (to use the usual phrase) enters an unfamiliar region of social space. Within that organized system of research and therapy the easiest objects of study are the "parts of the machine"—those portions of the individual patient which are most susceptible to test and measurable reaction. In such an environment of isolation from the personal and social forces which act upon the personality it is difficult to get a comprehensive understanding of the personality of the patient. An over-all view is a greater achievement of clinical synthesis in a hospital than in a house; a thoroughgoing mechanistic analysis of the patient is more difficult in the home than in the ward.

The task of medical education is to

develop fully the capacity both for clinical synthesis and for mechanistic analysis. The questions arise: What conditions most favour this double development? What factors make those first few months of general practice something to be anticipated with dread and looked back on with relief as a thing long past? That many practitioners are eased in this transition by the senior partner of the firm they join, and thus enjoy a postgraduate apprenticeship, shows that the present—we do not know yet about the future—organization of medicine can allow the filling up of this gap in technical education.

*How does the doctor spend his day and his energy?*—Odd though it may seem, there has never been a "job analysis" of the doctor's working day, or, if such an investigation has been made, it has received almost no publicity. It would appear that medical education has developed without a detailed reference to the job for which the student is being trained. How much of the doctor's time and how much of his skill are employed in the diagnosis and therapy of injuries, disorders, or normal processes—for example, confinements? How much of his day is given to specific planned acts of therapy, how much to diagnosis, and how much to travelling? Nor do we know how his time is divided between the age groups, the occupation groups, the income groups, or disease groups, or how far the proportions vary with urban and rural and other social and geographical divisions.

Important as these facts would be, one would think, both for teaching and for planning the future of a health service, even such an investigation of the relatively easily measurable units of time would ignore the subtler but perhaps more important factor of "concern." The doctor has concern for his patient; he is

worried if he does not know what is wrong with him or how to bring him relief for his suffering. It is this concern which makes him feel the personal and human value of his work in the social—or, if you will, the spiritual—life of the community; it is something which makes him regard the financial return as only a part of the reward of his profession.

This factor, so important to the vitality of the profession and to its growth, cannot easily be brought within the scope of the mechanistically oriented education of the student. One does not have this concern—feeling for organs but only for a person, a fellow human being; one cannot book-learn it; it comes from a personal relationship.

The worries of the first few months of the general practitioner's life, or even the first few years, spring not from a need to harden his heart to suffering but to soften it so that he can feel his way into what the patient is going through in his suffering and yet keep his head. It is the attribute of professional competence to appraise the feelings of the patient, through sympathy with him, without losing objectivity and judgment of the situation as a whole. To get this over-all appraisal of the situation is often one of the main motives which lead the patient to seek professional advice, and the doctor cannot give it unless he has faced all the issues which confront his patient.

Though the patient may have to move into the "hospital area" of social space and the doctor may have to move into that of the "family area," the appraisal can best take place in the neutral ground of the doctor's consulting-room. He must make it neutral to all influences and prejudices if it is to act as a "diagnostic and therapeutic area" in which patient and practitioner can both move with ease and mutual understanding.

*The medical interview.*—One thing must be assumed in medical work: a patient never consults his doctor without good and sufficient cause. He may make a great fuss over what seems a trivial complaint, or he may dismiss as trivial symptoms of the gravest significance, but the cardinal fact is that he has come to a point when he cannot manage by himself something concerning himself—there is a breakdown in adjustment processes. Let us leave on one side those seemingly easy cases—for example, a cut hand needing a few stitches (though even such events may be indicators of accident-proneness or some such short-cut solution of a long-standing trouble)—and all of those cases which occasion the doctor no concern. What remain? Just those cases—and taken over the year how numerous they are!—where the physical-mechanistic solution to human suffering has failed.

Two questions the practitioner has to put to himself: What is wrong? and, no less important, How ill is the patient? A repetition of a visit to the surgery with the same worried expression about the same "trivial" complaint, or a new one equally trivial, is a distress signal: the degree of the maladjustment is not to be measured by the degree of dysfunction of the organ system complained of—the patient is more ill than his body gives warrant for. What should the doctor do—judge the situation by the sole criterion of physical disability and dismiss the rest as "imagination," or assume that where there is much complaining there is something paining? And if this be the case, how does one discover the cause if it is not in the body? Is the registered medical practitioner to have traffic with the woes of the soul? Perhaps he need not go quite so far.

It was said that the consulting-room should be a sort of neutral ground where everything can be considered dis-

passionately (which is not the same as cold-heartedly) and without prejudice. If the patient has some worry on his mind his original complaint may be only a point of entry to the consulting-room, where he wants to get rid of his burden. Then the important thing is not only to let him talk but for the doctor to let himself listen. When it has been acquired, the art of listening is not a tedious one-way traffic but a technique of getting the patient to unfold the life-history of the suffering lying at the root of his present complaint as it is to be seen in the framework of the development of his personality as a whole: a history-giving rather than a history-taking. How can this art be acquired?

*No research without therapy: No therapy without research.*—This is rather a grand way of saying, among other things, that between patient and practitioner there must be a two-way traffic.

The sufferings which lead to "trivial or pointless complaints," no less than an easily spotted neurosis, are basically hidden from and are confused for the patient himself; they are bound up with the development of his personality and are an expression of conflicting trends within it. If their solution were easily within his capacity he would have solved them long ago; the fact that he comes to his doctor is sufficient evidence that his powers of adaptation have for the moment at least broken down. He cannot cope with the present problems of his life because he has to solve and satisfy unresolved and uncompleted emotional situations of the past. The aim of the interview is to allow the patient to disclose as fully and as freely as possible the history of his development. This disclosure the doctor must meet with sincerity of purpose and dispassionateness and he must not lose patience in the face of failure.

These qualities are among those which are prerequisites in the research worker. The solving of the problem of mental pain in the individual patient is not possible without this research quality in the therapist, and his greatest contribution to the two-way process is less often advice than an understanding of the problem at issue.

Research workers who try to invade the private lives of human beings to wrest from them answers to abstract research problems seldom get far with their researches into the cause and cure of mental suffering, and their work usually remains in the academic library for which it was written. People can disclose the sources of their mental suffering only during the actual experience of relief of that suffering. The so-called "normal psychology," which takes no account of the influence of pain, anxiety, guilt, and grief on human behaviour, need not for long detain the medical student in his preparation to deal with people and their problems in real-life situations.

*Is psychiatry yet another speciality?*—When a patient comes into a consulting-room the doctor has before him only the small segment existing in the present of an organism with an extension in time. This organism, as was recently said by a writer in the *Lancet*, began as a speck of jelly and will end some day as a life-size corpse. It grows by constant interaction with its environment passing through different physiological phases and as many different psychological and social orientations. The egoism of the infant partly gives place to the passions of love and rage of the child (both, often and most embarrassingly, directed to the same person), and later to the stormy mixtures of adolescence, then to a fairly stable maturity, and finally shrinking in body and mind in old age (Shakespeare has said that better, but it bears repetition). Each age and stage

has its problems, which when unsolved are never completely left behind: the doctor has to listen for the murmur of those old and unresolved complaints beneath the apparent preoccupation with present ills.

The study of these problems is called psychopathology; the application of such knowledge to the suffering of the individual is a part of psychiatry (and of groups, "sociatary"). The training of the student to elicit a history (the much-guarded history of the development of the personality) is one of the duties of his psychiatric teachers. Training for the assessment of the retardations of development, intellectual and emotional, is also part of psychiatric teaching.

The whole range of neuroses, marital maladjustment, character disorders, delinquency, and insanity the wider range of so-called psychosomatic affections, and the still wider range of mild and temporary worrying upsets (which are partly due to misery of spirit or insecurity, to lack of love or incapacity to give and receive affection and find rest of body and mind)—all these are medical problems which get help from psychiatry, and sometimes only there. Is psychiatry a speciality? It stands outside the physical-mechanistic separatism which was till perhaps recently the prevailing convention in modern medicine, for if it is to do its job it must take a wide and time-spanning view of the personality in its social setting: it is of course no less a speciality than medicine itself.

*On bringing the student to the patient.*—

(a) The medical student should be brought at an early stage in his career into relation with patients. For example, when dissecting he should have periodic turns of duty as a dresser in the casualty out-patients department; even a sprained wrist or ankle should be seen in relation not only to anatomy but also to social disability. The young student

should be relieved of some of his load of corpses and learn to carry live burdens. (Some of the apparent immaturity of the medical student is a reaction to the abstract and impersonal nature of his studies, which frustrate his clinical inclinations. It is a sad thing that the student's first "patient" is a corpse.)

(b) Much more time should be lived in medical institutions. Even in the pre-clinical years the student could learn some of the routine of the ward as a student orderly, both to have an insight into how patients behave and what they feel when doctors are not present, and to get some first-hand knowledge of the ward as a community. A few weeks in epileptic and mental defective colonies, in tuberculosis and other sanatoria for chronic cases would widen his understanding of the chronically sick. His status on some of these visits would be nearer to that of the nursing than the medical staff; on others he should go as assistant to the doctors.

I might illustrate the value of the good nurse's approach to a case by the following example: A patient in a public ward suffered from nocturnal attacks, of respiratory and other kinds of distress. His house-physician and the registrar were asked by a doctor patient in the same ward, as a matter of professional interest, what precipitated the attacks. They did not know; medical examination gave no clue. The patient's nurse was asked and gave an answer without hesitation: the attacks followed the visits of a particular relative. Two comments here: first, the nurse, whose knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathology, and clinical medicine was of high nursing standard, used that knowledge in a quite different way from the house-physician and registrar: the latter made it the sole theoretical instrument of aetiology and diagnosis; the former (per-

haps freer because she had no self-imposed duty to limit her thinking to what she read in books) was able to observe the facts as a whole. The doctors had not asked about the effect of visitors; it had not, presumably, come into their theories of aetiology. The second point is that the nurse observed the patient in a wider region of biological activity, that of the family—that is, in a social setting. The doctors saw only what lay in the bed, not even what came to the bed-side. Which, in this case, was the more clinical and which the more veterinary observer? Of course, such a question should not be put: it is a question framed with reference to “academic subjects” and not to scientific method. Rather let us ask. Which of the two provided himself or herself with the greater number of frames of reference, and used them in an integrative way?

Speaking aphoristically, the best medical instruction is clinical—that is, bedside. If the patient's illness and not “a disease entity” be the subject of instruction, the best bed for this purpose is the patient's own, the next best is one that the hospital pupil has to be responsible for, the third best is that which is in hospital and which someone else looks after; the first educates the G.P., the second the nurse; the medical student in this respect comes off third best. I am referring to learning about the illnesses of actual people, not about diseases; and further, I am saying no more than that this kind of bedside or clinical experience—though it does not come into examination-ridden curricula—is important for the student and the young practitioner.

(c) He should at first be taken by almoners and psychiatric social workers, and later go alone, on follow-up visits to a selection of the patients he has seen and treated as out-patients and in the wards. He should realize how large is the gap

between the “social space” of the family and that of the hospital, and he should be taught the techniques for lessening and bridging that gap—for example, the endeavours made increasingly nowadays, to create within the hospital and convalescent home transitional communities where the recovering patient can make an effective rehabilitation.

(d) He should have experience in all branches of the mental out-patients department, in intelligence testing, in the social workers' department, and above all in the practice of psychiatric interviewing.

(e) He should interview relatives of patients with the same care as patients themselves—time spent on learning interview technique is repaid a hundredfold in his general practice.

(f) Anything that brings the student to the patient, to his home, to his factory should be welcomed, and will help to make the transition from medical school to professional life as easy and as fruitful as possible.

(g) Medical education should proceed on the principle (hard though it be to apply) that knowledge gained through the shouldering of responsibilities is the best sort of medical knowledge to have.

*On using the ex-student's experience.*—A sample survey might be made one, two, and five years after leaving medical school, asking general practitioners what comments they would like to make on the curriculum of their training. Such opinion-taking would be specially useful to estimate the desirability of continuing experimental changes in the curriculum and dropping those that were not expedient.

*The doctor-patient relationship.*—An experiment is in train to evolve a national health service. The stability of the profes-

sion *vis-à-vis* the patient population will ultimately depend on the doctor's capacity to meet the patient's need to be understood as a person. If treated as a merely physical mechanism composed of parts and system the patient will turn more than ever to self-medication or to unqualified persons. The existence of quacks\* is a reproach to the training and to the practice of the regular profession. (A survey of medical needs and medical aids if realistic, would have to include the activities of the quack, his clientele, and his method of work).

The remedy for the problem of unqualified practice lies in better medical qualification—a training which meets the

needs of those worried and distrusting patients who cannot define their ills and who turn from one adviser to another till they find a listener.

The organization of a national health service will fail of its purpose if scope is not given in fullest measure for the relationship between doctor and patient to be one of personal trust and confidence and that continuity of interest in the individual patient which springs from professional "concern."

—By John Rickman, President, Institute of Psycho-analysis, London. *British Medical Journal*. September 6, 1947. pp. 363-65.

### "MARCH OF DIMES" CAMPAIGN

Throughout the United States volunteer leaders are preparing to aid the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis through the 1948 March of Dimes Campaign, which will be conducted January 15 through 30. The National Foundation of Infantile Paralysis was established in 1938 by the late President Roosevelt, who was himself a victim of the disease, in the hope not only of assisting others so stricken, but of discovering some preventive and cure for this scourge of childhood.

Since the creation of the Foundation in 1938, some 112,000 cases of infantile paralysis have occurred, of which 88,000 have been directly aided by the Foundation. More than 400 hospitals have been equipped and staffed to handle poliomyelitis cases. Large-scale research has been directed against the disease, the first time in world history that such widespread research has been focussed upon a single disease. Twenty-four branches of science are now at work on one or more aspects of the problem.

\*A quack may be defined as a person who seeks to establish a quasi-professional relation to a client (or patient) without having first submitted himself to a course of training regarded as adequate by the teachers in that profession; who makes no consistent endeavour to integrate any discovery he may make in the exercise of the profession to the body of knowledge already existing—to the end that the range of experience of the next generation of students may be improved; who when in a difficulty with diagnosis or treatment does not call in a brother-practitioner, laying before him all the facts known, being ready to accept the advice offered, or who would not be willing, if called in by a brother-practitioner, to put his experience fully at his disposal and return the patient to his own practitioner, not trying to keep him for himself; and who is unwilling to submit himself to the discipline of the organizations of his profession in matters affecting his ethical relations to his patients.

The definition turns on four things: on the willingness to learn in due humility from an older generation, to give without arrogance to the next generation, to treat one's own generation with generosity as equals, and to submit to a social code.

Most of the articles on quacks and quackery enlarge on the practitioner—patient relationship; ought not more consideration be given to the relation existing between persons in the same field of social activity—namely, brother practitioners?



During the past two and one-half years, physio-therapy scholarships have been sponsored by the Foundation, with a resulting 25 per cent increase in the number of technicians working in the field. Attention is now being centered on bringing the most up-to-date knowledge of diagnosis and treatment of poliomyelitis to family

doctors.

The 1948 goal of the March of Dimes Campaign is 30,000,000 dollars, needed to rebuild the depleted epidemic aid reserve and to finance further services and research. Funds for its great work are secured only by the voluntary efforts and contributions of the American people.

### NEW WELFARE MEASURES FOR THE AGED POOR

With the National Assistance Bill now before the House of Commons—it passed through the Second Reading unopposed in November—the end of the present Poor Law in Britain is now in sight.

It is a Bill which was welcomed by all parties in the House. It runs to 65 clauses and seven schedules to achieve the final break up of the Poor Law and to create in its place entirely new services founded on modern conceptions of social welfare.

To achieve this end the Bill repeals, entirely or partially, 80 Acts of Parliament, some of which, incorporated in more recent legislation, were passed as long ago as 1601. Others were passed in the nineteenth century and have remained unaltered on the Statute Book.

The Bill is likely to become effective law by July, 1948. It will complete the main pattern of Britain's new social legislation, of which the Family Allowances, National Insurance (Industrial Injuries), National Insurance, and the National Health Services Acts are other principal features.

*Two main groups.*—Under the Bill provisions are made for services falling into two main groups :—

- (1) National Assistance taking the form mainly of financial aid to those in need (and whose needs are not met by National

Insurance or from any other source). This becomes a State responsibility, and not the joint responsibility of local authorities and the Government, as it is at present;

- (2) Residential accommodation for the aged, infirm and others who require care and attention, with special welfare services for certain handicapped persons. This will become a charge of the local authorities with certain assistance from the State.

Local authorities will no longer be concerned with the relief of destitution as it was known in the past, and the local poor law institutions will disappear. In the place of the large, bleak, barrack-like institutions there will be built small, residential homes, with running hot and cold water, and laundry services.

*Relieving rate-payers.*—By the transference of charges in the first part from local authorities to the national Exchequer it will relieve rate-payers throughout Britain of an expense of £18,500,000 (Rs. 24.6 crores) a year. At present domiciliary assistance given by local authorities costs about £15,000,000 (Rs. 19.9 crores), with another £3,500,000 (Rs. 4.6 crores) for assistance to blind people.

It is estimated that the cost to the Exchequer, based on the existing schemes, will be something in the region of £29,650,000 (Rs. 39.5 crores) a year, but it is likely the actual cost under the new scheme will be higher. In addition, there will be a further £100,000 (Rs. 13,31,200) required annually for the provision of residential accommodation for the aged and infirm, under the second part of the Bill.

In the next five years for this purpose it will be necessary to provide 20,000 additional beds in England and Wales, and 3,000 in Scotland. Of these, 60 per cent will have to be provided in new buildings and the Government will supply a subsidy. It will be payable for 60 years at the rate of £7. 10s. (Rs. 99) per annum (Scotland £11) in respect of single bedrooms, and for other bedrooms not exceeding £6. 10s., (Rs. 86) per annum (Scotland £9. 10s.) multiplied by the number of occupants for which the room is designed.

*Assistance grants.*—The new service for financial assistance will be administered by a National Assistance Board established in areas throughout the United Kingdom. Any person of 16 or over, who is in need, may apply for assistance, including a person who needs assistance to supplement a pension or insurance benefit. It is expected that the applicants will be mainly aged, disabled or sick people, living in their own homes. Assistance grants will be made to those living in residential accommodation, if their resources are insufficient to meet the minimum charges.

If there is any dissatisfaction about a decision made by a National Assistance Board Officer, the applicant has the right of appeal to a local Tribunal, comprised of a Chairman, one other appointed by the Minister of National Insurance, and a third

member selected in rotation from a panel to represent workpeople.

The casual poor person also becomes the responsibility of the National Assistance Board. Provision will be made whereby persons without a settled way of living may be influenced to lead a more settled life. Temporary accommodation will be provided in reception centres.

The steps to be taken to influence a person to settle down naturally will vary. For instance, old and infirm people may be induced to settle in a Home; younger persons capable of work will be put in touch with opportunities of employment, and those who are unfit for work through inexperience may be helped in a re-establishment centre.

*Intimate rooms.*—The new residential homes which become the responsibility of local authorities, with a Government subsidy, will be for people who, because of age, infirmity or other circumstance, are in need of care and attention not otherwise available to them. They will not include sick persons who will come under the new National Health Service. The service will include all necessary care, maintenance and amenities.

Thus local authorities will be concerned, not to relieve destitution, but to provide comfortable accommodation for those who need care and attention. The new homes are to be small, each housing not more than 25 to 30 persons. There will be nothing to suggest the institution or workhouse. The rooms will be decorated in bright colours, and will be comfortably furnished. In the dining-rooms bare trestle tables will be replaced by smaller tables. Generally, rooms are to be smaller and more intimate. Wherever possible each person will have a separate bedroom with plenty of chairs and cupboards.

But perhaps the most significant feature of the scheme is that each occupant will have a feeling of independence as each one will pay for his or her accommodation. This independence signifies much to old people as they draw towards the evening of their lives. It eliminates all stigma of charity.

The old people will be expected to pay a minimum charge of 21s. (Rs. 14) a week. Thus old age pensioners, who will form a large percentage of the occupants of these homes, will be able to pay their own way and still will have 5s. (Rs. 3-4-0) a week to spend. Where a person's resources do not amount to 26s. (Rs. 17/-) a week the National Assistance Board will make an allowance to bring the income up to that total.

*Handicapped persons.*—At present, under the Blind Persons' Acts (1920 and

1938) arrangements are made for the welfare of blind people. But under the National Assistance Bill it is proposed to extend these services to the deaf or dumb and to other persons who are substantially or permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity. Apart from any financial aid which might be made by the National Assistance Board it is proposed to instruct handicapped persons, in their own homes or elsewhere, and to set up workshops and hostels for such workers, and to provide recreational facilities.

With such a Bill before the House of Commons it is no wonder that when it passed the Second Reading, an Opposition Member said it was "a very great measure" and a tribute to the strength and humanity of the country that at this time, in spite of diminished resources, she was going forward along this path.—David Curnock.

#### STUDENTS—PAST AND PRESENT

Mr. Bhave, J. V. ('42) has been appointed Inspector of Labour Welfare (Mines) by the Ministry of Labour and is now assigned to Nagpur.

Miss Cabinetmaker, P. H. ('44) has joined the staff of the University School of Economics and Sociology, Bombay, as Research Assistant.

Mr. Chatterji, B. ('45) has been elected Associate Secretary of the Indian Conference of Social Work and as member of the Executive Committee of the Bombay Provincial Physical Education Conference.

Mr. Edward, S. T. ('38) has contributed the chapter on "Labour Legislation in Postwar India" of the book entitled *Indian Labour Problems*, edited by A. N. Agarwala. (Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1947).

Mr. Gore, M. S. ('45) has been elected Associate Secretary of the Indian Conference of Social Work.

Mr. Harshe, G. N. ('40) is now working as Superintendent of the Yeravda Industrial School, Poona.

Rev. Jebaraj, A. G. ('49) has contributed an article on "The Tata Institute of Social Sciences" to the *Tinnevely Diocesan Magazine*, Vol. 338, pp. 101-3 (August, 1947).

Miss Khanderia, J. G. ('46) is now working as Superintendent, Women's Home, Kurukshetra Camp, East Punjab.

Mr. Kulkarni, D. V. ('38) who recently returned from the United States, has commenced work as Inspector of Certified Schools, Government of Bombay, and is now posted at Poona.

Mr. Kulkarni, P. D. ('46) is now working as Information and Publicity Officer, Kurukshetra Camp, East Punjab.

Miss Lakdawala, K. A. ('46) has been appointed Assistant Secretary of The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene in India, New Delhi.

Miss Malhotra R. ('46) has been deputed by the Director of Health Services, Delhi, for special training in Medical Social Work at the Institute.

Mr. Mathur, S. K. ('47) has been appointed Labour Officer of the Delhi Cloth and General Mills Limited, Delhi.

Mr. Mukerjee, A. K. ('46) has been appointed Labour Technical Assistant, Indian Sugar Syndicate, Cawnpore.

Mr. Nagaraj, A. G. ('42) has been appointed Senior Assistant in the Prohibition Department of the Government of Bombay.

Mr. Panakal, J. A. ('47) who was undergoing training at the Department of Economics and Statistics, Tata Industries Limited, has now joined the Industrial Court, Bombay, as Research Assistant. He has been elected General Secretary of the Alumni Association for the year 1947-48.

Mr. Panakal, J. J. ('46) has contributed a study on "Holidays With Pay" to the Symposium on Planning for Labour presented by the Indian Labour Forum to the Preparatory Asian Regional Conference of the International Labour Organisation.

Mr. Paul, K. ('46) is now working as Assistant Welfare Officer, Kurukshetra Camp, East Punjab.

Mr. Ram, E. J. S., has been promoted to the post of the Deputy Director of Labour Administration of the Government of Bombay. He has been elected Chairman of the Alumni Association for the year 1947-48. Mr. Ram has contributed

the chapter on "Industrial Welfare in Post-War India," of the book entitled *Indian Labour Problems*, edited by A. N. Agarwala. (Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1947).

Mr. Ranade, S. N. ('47) has joined the staff of the Institute of Social Sciences, Kashi Vidyapith, Benares.

Miss Rangier, L. ('44) has married Mr. Rajamani of the Associated Press of India and is now settled in New Delhi.

Mrs. Renu, I. ('38) was awarded United Nations Fellowship for studying the organisation of child guidance clinics in the United States and Canada. She left for New York on November the 13th, 1947, and will return after a period of six months.

Miss Rochlani, S. P. ('47) has commenced duties with the Prohibition Department of the Government of Bombay as Senior Assistant.

Mr. Sathe, H. V. ('47) has joined the Directorate of Labour Information, Government of Bombay, as Labour Investigator.

Mr. Sen, S. R. ('47) has been appointed Labour Officer of the National Tobacco Company of India Limited, Agarpara, Bengal.

Miss Sharma, V. ('46) has resigned from her position as Assistant Lady Labour Welfare Officer of the Government of Bombay and has returned to Delhi.

Mr. Shembavnekar, B. K. ('47) has been appointed Senior Assistant in the Prohibition Department of the Government of Bombay.

Mr. Yousuf, K. ('47) has been appointed Labour Welfare Officer by the Hyderabad Government.

Miss Zachariah, S. ('44) has been appointed Assistant Inspectress of Factories by the Government of Madras and is now posted at Madura.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Fortunes of Primitive Tribes.* By D. N. Majumdar. Lucknow: Universal Publishers Limited, 1944. pp. 234.

The title of this book—which is incidentally almost identical with the title of an article which I wrote some years ago for this *Journal*—gives little indication that it is in fact the first part of an ethnographic survey of the United Provinces. Dr. Majumdar is always at his best when he describes individual tribes and cultures, and the present volume is a most welcome contribution to the all too scanty literature on the cis-Himalayan people on India's borders. Of the three peoples described at length, the Tharus and Khasas are mountain dwellers of comparatively advanced civilization whereas the Korwas are a primitive tribe inhabiting the scrub jungles of Mirzapur, the southernmost district of the Province. They occur in much larger numbers in the adjacent States of Sarguja and Jashpur as well as in some districts of Bihar. Dr. Majumdar is of the opinion that originally the Korwas were hunters and food-gatherers pure and simple (p. 17), and that they took to a crude slash-and-burn cultivation only when outside pressure interfered with their old style of forest life. But judging from the material presented in this book, I am inclined to believe that they belong rather to the ethnological stratum of primitive shifting cultivators such as Kolams, Kamars and possibly Baigas—all people in the transitional stage between food-gathering and cultivation. This particular stratum of which there is evidence in many parts of peninsular India, has so far received scant attention in anthropological literature, but as more and more material is gathered, its distinctiveness from the civilizations of the fully fledged agriculturists, such as Mundas or Santals, becomes increasingly clear. One of the reasons for the difficulty of placing this stratum into

any scheme of ethnological reconstruction is the impossibility of associating it with any of the existing language groups. The Korwas speak a Munda language and other tribes of comparable culture speak Aryan or Dravidian dialects, but it is obvious that in all these cases the language was taken over from more advanced neighbours. The original tongues of these most primitive of agriculturists on Indian soil seem to be irretrievably lost. In their physical features, however, most of these tribes have retained characteristics which distinguish them clearly from the surrounding population and Dr. Majumdar's book contains some interesting remarks on the blood groups of the Korwas.

The second chapter of the book deals with the Tharus, a large and important agricultural community concentrated in the Naini Tal District, where they number about 30,000. The Tharus are one of those Himalayan tribes of mongoloid type which through long association with Indian populations have absorbed a number of non-mongoloid features. Their culture shows a comparable fusion of elements stemming from different spheres. The basis of Tharu economy is the cultivation of rice on irrigated terraces, but hunting and fishing play a considerable role in their life, and great social importance attaches to skill in these crafts. Indeed it seems that fundamentally the Tharus fall in line with the mongoloid hill-tribes of the Eastern Himalayas, but while the latter live to this day in comparative isolation, the Tharus have assimilated a great many features of Hindu civilization, particularly in regard to their material equipment.

Though Tharu society is not organized on matrilineal lines, women play a very

important, and in some respects, a dominant part in the economic and social life. They mix freely with men and women of other castes, and have the reputation of being skilled in powerful magic, to which outsiders attribute the influence they have over their own menfolk. While women can separate from their husbands at will, it is not easy for a man to obtain a divorce from his wife.

All this suggests a matriarchal substratum or the influence of a matriarchal people on the Tharus. Dr. Majumdar does not commit himself to either view, though he considers it possible "that in the Tarai and the Himalayan region, among aboriginal Tharus or among the isolated Indo-Aryans, the Khasas and the Kumaonese, a matriarchal society existed which has profoundly influenced the culture patterns of the Khasa as well as of the Tharu." (p.73).

The Khasas or Khasiyas are the third people described in the present book. In physical type they resemble Kashmiris, and they are divided into castes claiming Rajput and Brahmin descent. But although practising certain Hindu customs, they differ in many respects from the orthodox high caste Hindus. They are strictly patrilineal and follow patrilineal inheritance, and most villages are exogamous units. Brother polyandry is a rule, and in joint families several brothers share one or more wives in common. The eldest brother, who is the ceremonial and economic head of the family has no exclusive right of cohabitation, and the children, whose physical paternity cannot be established with any certainty, are allotted to the brothers in turn. A peculiar feature of Khasa society are the seasonal migrations of the young married women who regularly return to their parents' village, where they help in house and fields. Their place in the

husbands' village is taken by the husbands' sisters who come in turn to assist in the harvest. While the women stay in their husbands' village they are expected to be faithful, but during the annual visits to their parents they are allowed a great deal of licence, and intrigues with the men of their home-village. This is very frequent and do not meet with social disapproval, even if the lovers belong to the same exogamous unit. Khasa husbands seem to be singularly free from jealousy, and the periodical exodus of women is accepted as a matter of course. Dr. Majumdar is probably right in assuming that a submerged matriarchal system is responsible for these annual migrations and the double standard of morality of Khasa women whose code of behaviour changes according to the locality.

It is not easy to see with which population stratum this matriarchal system can be associated. If it belonged to a very old and primitive stratum indigenous in the Himalayan region we would expect to find matrilineal societies among the isolated tribes of the Eastern Himalayas, such as Daffas, Apa Tanis or Abors. But though in the social organization of all these tribes there are traits which suggest matriarchal influences, clear instances of matrilineal rules of descent or inheritance are lacking. The problem of the source of matriarchal customs in the Himalayas, thus remains unsolved, but studies such as Dr. Majumdar's account of the Khasas may gradually bring us nearer to a solution.

The book contains also a chapter on Criminal Tribes and closes with a discussion on 'social vigilance,' whereby the author understands the system of customs and beliefs through which a people maintains the integration and consistency of its traditional behaviour.

C. von Furer-Haimendorf

*The Gondwana and the Gonds.* By Indrajit Singh. Lucknow: The Universal Publishers Limited, 1944. pp. 201.

In recent years Indian anthropology has made rapid progress and many areas which even ten years ago were blank on the ethnographic map have been covered by intensive studies of their aboriginal inhabitants. The standard of anthropological investigations is also steadily rising and there is no more justification for books written in as diffuse a style as *The Gondwana and the Gonds*. Though the author states that the book is "the outcome of a field economic survey of the Gond groups of tribes living mostly in the hills and jungles of the Central Provinces and Bastar," there is no indication whatsoever which areas his field-work has covered, and the reader is often left guessing to which of the many and culturally diverse groups of Gonds his descriptions apply. Many customs and habits which the author ascribes to Gonds in general prevail only among certain groups and to describe them as characteristic of Gond culture as such creates a false picture. There is a world of difference between the Hill Maria with his hoe-cultivation on oft-shifted hill-fields and the settled Raj Gond plough-cultivator, and the attempt to deal with both in a general account of Gond culture shows an error of judgment in planning the book.

The chapter on Kinship Organisation is extremely sketchy and it would indeed seem that the author (who mentions that he did most of his journeys by car!) has visited only areas where the complex system of exogamous divisions and clans has largely disintegrated. Though the main emphasis of the book is on economics, there is no detailed investigation into the life of any individual group which could be recognized as the result of original research.

The utilization of literary sources is equally superficial. There is no mention of any of Verrier Elwin's numerous articles on Gonds while old gazeteers and Russel's *Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces* are quoted as if they were reliable sources. The references to my study of the *morung*-system of the Konyak Nagas on pp. 59 and 65 are definitely misleading. (Girls' dormitories and bachelors' halls are never in one building, there is no initiation ceremony for girls and they can never become members of a *morung*!)

But the most surprising of errors is the confusion between *kharif* and *rabi* crops. *Kharif* is, of course, the crop sown at the beginning of the rains and harvested in the autumn, and *rabi* is the cold weather crop. The author is mistaken in believing that *rabi* is the first and *kharif* the second crop, and all his arguments about *kharif* and *rabi* tracts are consequently untenable.

The populous and important group of Gond tribes still offers almost unlimited regional scope for anthropological research. Detailed regional studies comparable to S. Hivale's work on the 'Pardhans of Mandla and S. C. Dube's work on the Kamars of Raipur are an urgent *desideratum* and the intensive study of even a single Gond village of the Central Provinces would be a most welcome contribution to our knowledge of this interesting people. At a time when Provincial and State governments are beginning to realize the need for social service among the aboriginals of backward areas, it is for the anthropologist to provide concrete and accurate information by which administrative action can be guided. While *The Gondwana and the Gonds* does not substantially add to the material contained in

W. V. Grigson's reports on the aboriginal problem in the Central Provinces, it must be said in favour of the book that Dr. Indrajit Singh correctly assesses the results of uncontrolled contact between Gonds and progressive populations and of its serious dangers to aboriginal prosperity. After several years residence among the Gonds of Hyderabad, I agree on the whole with the argument put forward in Chapter XII and I subscribe emphatically to the author's criticism of legislation facilitating the transfer of the aboriginals' land such

as contained in the Central Provinces Tenancy Act of 1939. Dr. Singh is appreciative of the valuable elements in traditional Gond culture and his attitude towards the Murias' youth-dormitories is sympathetic and free of prejudice. His general knowledge of the Gonds and their institutions might stand him in good stead if he were to take up the long overdue study of the various groups of Gonds in any such district as Betul or Chhindwara.

C. von Furer-Haimendorf





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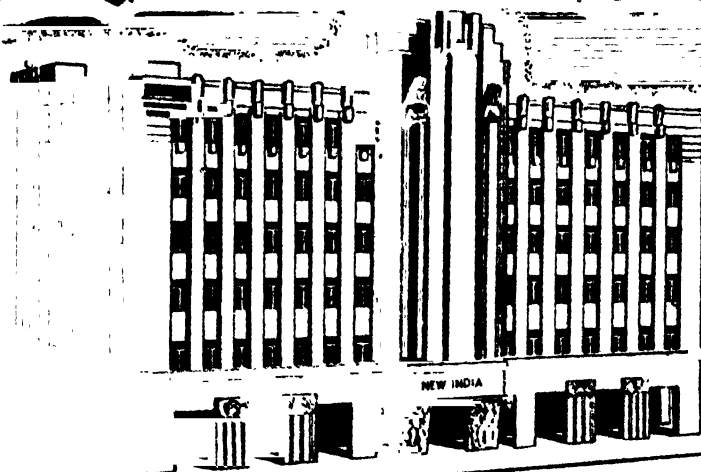
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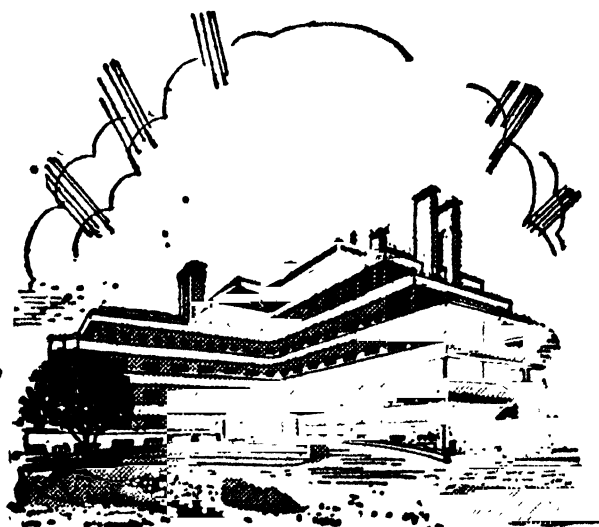
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